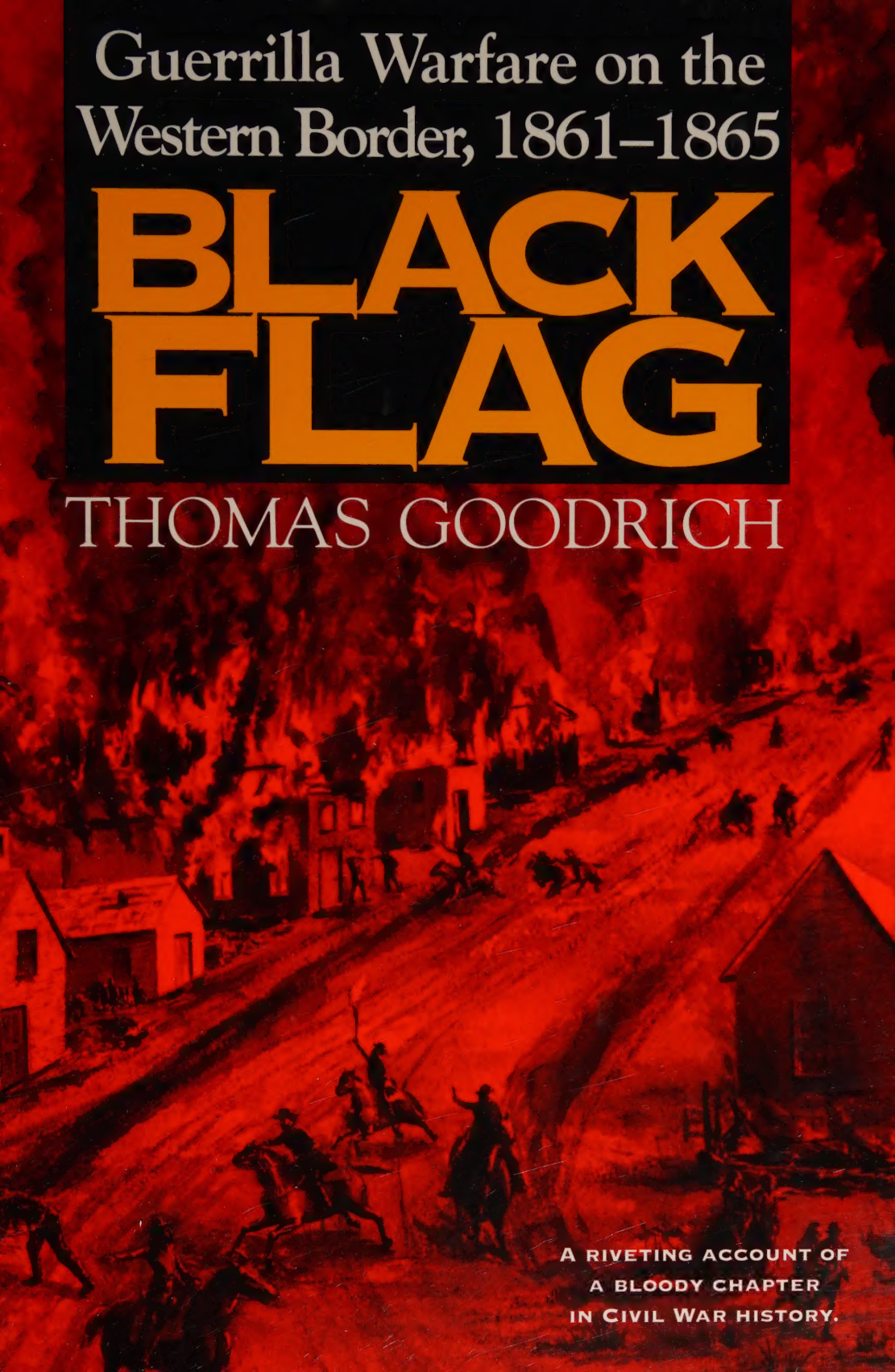
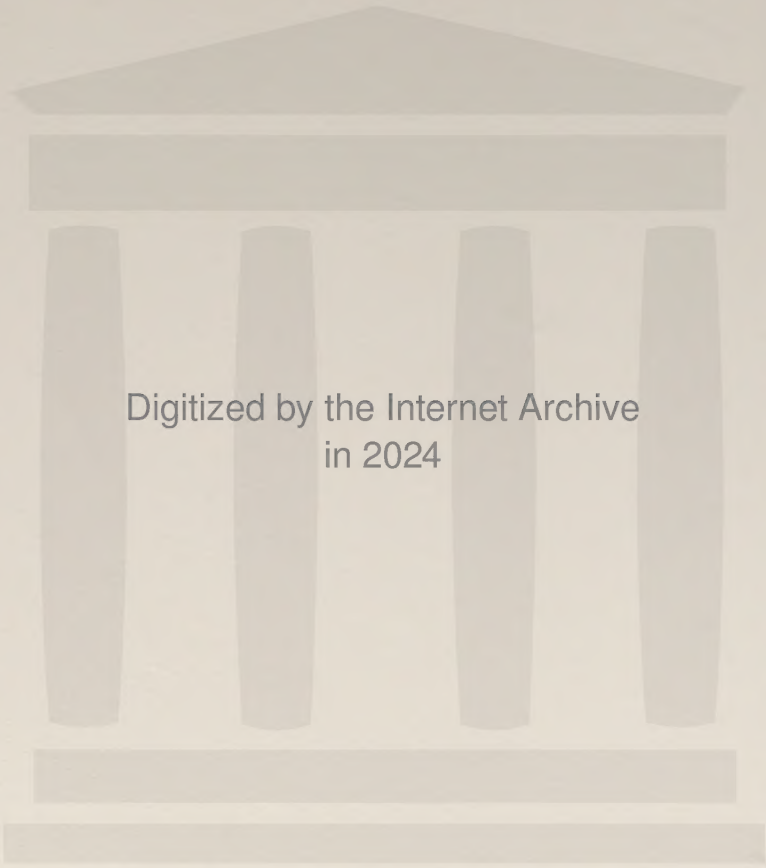
Guerrilla Warfare on the Western Border, 1861–1865

BLACK FLAG

THOMAS GOODRICH



A RIVETING ACCOUNT OF A BLOODY CHAPTER IN CIVIL WAR HISTORY.


Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2024

https://archive.org/details/blackflagguerril0000thom

BLACK FLAG

Guerrilla Warfare on the Western Border, 1861–1865

Thomas Goodrich

Indiana University Press | BLOOMINGTON AND INDIANAPOLIS

This book is a publication of

Indiana University Press
601 North Morton Street
Bloomington, Indiana 47404-3797 USA

www.indiana.edu/~iupress

Telephone orders 800-842-6796
Fax orders 812-855-7931
Orders by e-mail iuporder@indiana.edu

First reprinted in paperback in 1999.
© 1995 by Thomas Goodrich

All rights reserved

No part of this book may be reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. The Association of American University Presses' Resolution on Permissions constitutes the only exception to this prohibition.

The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48-1984.

Manufactured in the United States of America

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Goodrich, Th.
Black Flag : guerrilla warfare on the western border, 1861–1865 / Thomas Goodrich.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references (p.—) and index.
ISBN 0-253-32599-4 (cl : alk. paper)
1. West (U.S.)—History—Civil War, 1861–1865—Underground movements. 2. United States—History—Civil War, 1861–1865—Underground movements. 3. Guerrillas—West (U.S.)—History—19th century. I. Title.
E470.45.G66 1995S
973.7'48—dc20 94-20849

ISBN 0-253-21303-7 (pbk : alk. paper)

2 3 4 5 6 04 03 02 01 00 99

Some of the most desperate men in guerrilla warfare were those who tried to stay at home during the Civil War to care for helpless ones, or who, having gone to the front, returned from time to time to look after their homes. Sometimes they found ashes where their homes stood. The people of the home were not to be found, or if found, they were naked and hungry, and now and then one would be found whose reason had been overthrown. Then the returned soldier lay in wait in the woods. He skulked by night. When the weather permitted he lay down to sleep by day in the tall grass of the prairie. After he had lived in this way for a little while, after he had comforted his feelings of revenge . . . and would have been willing to call it even, he found that he was proscribed. He knew he was hunted. He knew that whatever he had of kin, wherever it was found, would be made to suffer for his sake. And he knew, God help him, that he had no country and no flag. And then he fought to the death.

Now, when you find a dozen, twenty-five, fifty, or one hundred men whose lives have come together in this way, you can understand how they come to be terrors. You can understand the portent of the black flag.

—ANONYMOUS MISSOURI GUERRILLA

To Albert Castel

Gentleman, Scholar, Friend

CONTENTS

Prologue: May 24, 1856 1

1. The Prairies Ablaze 6

2. The Besom of Destruction 11

3. One Desperate Man 29

4. Fighting the Devil 41

5. Black Harvest 50

6. The Lot Was Cast 60

7. Lawrence 77

8. Order No. 11 96

9. A Most Fearful Sight 106

10. With a Heavy Heart 112

11. Rider on a Pale Horse 123

12. A Land without Pity 146

13. At War with Peace 157

BIBLIOGRAPHY 165

INDEX 169

BLACK FLAG

Prologue

MAY 24, 1856

They moved over the forest floor, swiftly but silently. Around them, all was black and forbidding now, for behind was the open prairie, and only the deep, dark woods witnessed their passage. In their grip they carried muskets and in their belts, pistols, and if the sharp blades that hung by their sides rattled in the night, none but the handful of men heard the sounds. A warm southern breeze swirled unseen through the young leaves above.

At last they stopped. Ahead, not far from the creek, the dark outline of a cabin appeared in a clearing. There was no reason to suspect; there were no lights, no sound, no movement. And yet, the men hesitated. The silence seemed ominous; the black menacing. After a short exchange of whispers and a long pause to listen, the group at last stepped cautiously toward the cabin.

James Doyle was a quiet, hard-working man who was more concerned with making a go of his new claim on the frontier than with making a slave state of Kansas. Although there had been much excitement in the territory over the political issue, Doyle, like the other pro-slavery settlers along the Pottawatomie, felt no special anxiety because of his free-state neighbors. Everyone knew everyone in the valley, and all seemed content to live and let live. Despite some earlier trouble farther north and the constant threats of agitators on both sides, there had been very little violence in Kansas since it first opened to settlement two years before, and almost none of it here to the south. And so, when there came a rap on his cabin door this dark, windy night, James Doyle quietly arose and went to the door. When Doyle questioned who it was, a voice from beyond at first sought directions, then asked for admittance. Claiming no foe, Doyle unlatched the door and stepped back.

From the black the strangers suddenly burst into the cabin and quickly surrounded the startled occupants. What was revealed by the faint, eerie glow from the lamp frightened Doyle and his huddled family. They quickly

The Western Border

saw that all of the eight intruders were relatively young. And all seemed terribly nervous and stared at the trembling family with quick, darting glances. All, that is, save one. He stepped forward, a tall, lean figure with deep furrows coursing his long, grim face. Unlike the rest, he had eyes that were cold and cruel and certain. In the flickering light the Doyles also saw that there was a strange, haunting glint in the man's eyes, as though they were not staring down upon a terrified family in a humble cabin on the Kansas frontier but were gazing instead far back into the past, where some ancient army was storming a walled city in a battle long forgotten. The old man announced in a clear voice that Doyle and his sons were now his prisoners. What happened next is related by Mahala Doyle:

> They first took my husband out of the house, then they took two of my sons—the two eldest, William and Drury. . . . My son John (sixteen years old) was spared because I asked them, in tears, to spare him. In a short time

Guerrilla Battleground

afterwards I heard the report of pistols—two reports; after which I heard moaning, as if a person was dying; then I heard a wild whoop.

Now, after midnight, the old man and his company slipped quickly through the woods a short distance until they came to the home of Allen

John Brown
Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka

Wilkinson, a "quiet, inoffensive man," a member of the pro-slavery Kansas legislature. Continues Wilkinson's wife, Louisa:

> I begged them to let Mr. Wilkinson stay with me, saying that I was sick and helpless, and could not stay by myself. My husband also asked them to let him stay with me until he could get someone to wait on me; told them that he would not run off, but would be there the next day, or whenever called for; the old man . . . looked at me, and then around at the children, and replied, "You have neighbors." I said, "So I have, but they are not here, and I cannot go for them." The old man replied, "It matters not," and told him to get ready. My husband wanted to put on his boots, and get ready, so as to be protected from the damp and night air, but they would not let him. Then they took my husband away.

A little farther on, William Sherman was roused from his bed and led into the night. There was silence for a moment or two. Then came the faint crack of a bursting cap. And that was all. The night quickly rushed in once more, and only the moan of the wind in the trees was heard along the Pottawatomie. It was over.

At daybreak a worried friend set off in search of William Sherman. He did not have far to go.

> I found [him] dead in the creek near my house. . . . I took [the body] out of the creek and examined it. . . . Sherman's skull was split open in two places, and some of his brains were washed out by the water; a large hole was cut in his breast, and his left hand was cut off, except a little piece of skin on one side.

At almost the same time, Mahala Doyle and her son, John, were searching the area around their cabin.

> I . . . found my husband and William, my son, lying dead in the road, near together, about two hundred yards from the house.

Adds the younger son, John:

> William's head was cut open and a hole was in his jaw, as though it was made by a knife, and a hole was also in his side. My father was shot in the forehead and stabbed in the breast. . . . I saw my other brother lying dead on the ground . . . near a ravine. His fingers were cut off; his head was cut open; there was a hole in his breast.

Unable to leave her sickbed, Louisa Wilkinson learned of the fate of her husband from a friend. Allen's body, she was told, had been hacked to pieces.

With his terrible swift sword, the shape of things to come had been hewn by a master's hand. John Brown, Army of the Lord, had struck.

1.

THE PRAIRIES ABLAZE

While others throughout the North were shocked and outraged by the firing on Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861, Kansans reacted differently. Many in the new state were elated at the prospects of a war with the South, or more specifically, many in Kansas relished the opportunity to punish their one and only neighbor, Missouri.

Since 1854, when passage of the Kansas/Nebraska Act opened the territory to settlement, the Pro-Slavery Party of Missouri had been a thorn in the side of Kansas. Nervous over the possibility of a free state abutting their fertile western border and of an endless prairie pulling like a magnet on runaway slaves, the planters of Missouri had worked feverishly to ensure that Kansas would become a slave state. There was never any question about Nebraska. With two U.S. senators in tow, that bleak northern realm almost certainly would join the Union as a free state. But Kansas was another matter. Blessed with broad woodlands and lush valleys, physically and climatically the eastern third of the territory was a mirror of western Missouri, where a large slave population had flourished for upwards of forty years. Slavery *could* exist on the virgin soil of Kansas, most Southerners believed, and to maintain the delicate balance of power in Congress, slavery in Kansas *had* to exist. Said one sure yet menacing pro-slavery paladin: "It is utterly impossible for the Abolitionists to attempt to make Kansas a Free State. Nature designed it for slavery and the South will never give it up without a struggle which may wreck the Union."

"This territory belongs to the South," added another, "and, by God, the South will have it!"

When elections were held shortly after Kansas opened to settlement, bands of Missourians crossed the lines to vote for pro-slavery candidates. The transparent fraud was, in Southern minds at least, no greater crime than that committed by organizations in New England which paid passage for any "hireling" willing to emigrate to the territory and vote the free-soil ticket. Because of Missouri's proximity, the pro-slavery slate for territorial

office handily carried the polls in the ensuing elections. Outraged by the ballot box stuffing, the increasingly militant free-state settlers chose to ignore the "bogus" legislature and simply set up their own government. Given the volatile situation and the high stakes involved, violence was unavoidable.

Gangs of Missouri "Border Ruffians," backed by a pro-Southern federal government, patrolled the roads and rivers of Kansas, harassing free-soilers, shielding their own, and ensuring that the pro-slavery laws were obeyed. Obnoxious free-staters were chased from their homes, occasionally jailed, and sometimes beaten or killed. "We will continue to tar and feather, drown, lynch, and hang every white-livered abolitionist who dares to pollute our soil," warned one Southerner.

Increasingly, however, as the surprising surge of Northern immigration rolled in, the free-state party seized the initiative. Desperately, in a bid to stem the tide, a large mob of pro-slavery men from both Missouri and the territory surrounded the free-soil capital, Lawrence, and on May 21, 1856, the defenseless settlement was captured and plundered. Although none of its citizens were injured, the sack of Lawrence ignited civil war in Kansas. Several days later, John Brown butchered five innocent men on Pottawatomie Creek, and for the next two years the violence in "Bleeding Kansas" seldom strayed from the hearts and minds of men and women, North and South. By 1858, however, the issue was settled. Although much of the trouble shifted south of the Kansas River as free-state marauders—Jayhawkers—attempted to drive pro-slavery settlers out of the region, the fate of the territory was sealed. Kansas would enter the Union as a free state.

"We have chased them into their very holes," cheered one of the victors. "We are now crowing on their own dung hills; let them come forth!"

Even so, many Kansans wanted more than a mere purge of slavers from the territory; many actively sought a way to punish Missouri for its acts of the past. Among a goodly number of Kansans there was an added incentive. From 1859 to 1860 a severe drought seared the territory, ruining crops and impoverishing farmers and merchants alike. By the eve of statehood, early in 1861, Kansas was on the brink of starvation. Western Missouri, on the other hand, because of a stable, long-rooted society, remained a region of peace and plenty. With no small amount of envy mingled with an already potent hatred, the eyes of Kansas were locked on the land over the line during the spring of Secession. All that was needed was a pretext. That pretext was not long in coming.

When news of the capture of Fort Sumter reached strongly secessionist western Missouri, joyous demonstrations broke out in towns large and small. By day there were blaring brass bands and ceremonial raisings of the new secessionist flag. By night there were torchlit parades and speechmaking.

"Your requisition . . . is illegal, unconstitutional . . . inhuman, and diabolical, and cannot be complied with," raged Missouri Governor Claiborne Jackson, in response to President Abraham Lincoln's call for men to crush the Southern rebellion. "Not one man will the state of Missouri furnish to carry on such an unholy crusade."

"We are unalterably with the South, . . ." echoed a Missouri editor, "and today declare that we are first, last, and all the time for our brethren of the South COME WEAL, COME WOE OR DEATH."

A short time later, on April 20, the Federal arsenal near Liberty was seized by a large band of secessionists and the weapons carted away. Soon after, when a St. Joseph postmaster hoisted the Stars and Stripes above his office, a frenzied mob tore the banner to shreds and tossed the flagpole into the river. Throughout the region riotous demonstrations were daily occurrences. All this was not lost on those across the border. With their old foe in virtual revolt, Kansans eagerly rushed to arms. Reported Hovey Lowman, editor of the Lawrence *State Journal*:

> The prairies are ablaze. The martial spirit of the people is fully aroused. Our exchanges from every part of the State come to us filled with notices of company elections, drills, parades, &c. The fighting men of '56 and '57 are nearly to a man in the field, and ready for service. All around the eye meets the gleam of the freshly burnished Sharp's rifle, and the ear catches the significant click of the newly oiled revolver. There is almost as much preparation for fighting . . . as for seeding and harvest.

North of the capital, Topeka, Peter Bryant excitedly wrote his brother on May 9:

> We have organized a military company in Holton, and it is said there are about to be two more organized in the County. Every man that is capable of lugging a musket is itching for a fight. . . . There is nothing talked about here except war. The boys of '56 . . . have a grudge against Missouri and the south that they will never forget until it is wiped out in blood.

Over the line, similar musters occurred as thousands of Missourians joined military organizations. It was not long, however, before Union troops from Illinois, Iowa, and some of the first regiments from Kansas invaded Missouri, driving the rebel army, led by former governor Sterling Price, into the southwest corner of the state. Left behind by Price's sudden departure, scores of old men and boys formed nocturnal guerrilla bands in an attempt to harry the Northern invasion.

On the night of September 3, 1861, learning that a train loaded with Federal soldiers from Kansas was approaching, one such group burned the railroad bridge over the Platte River, ten miles east of St. Joseph. What happened next is recorded by a passenger, Sidney Clarke:

The train was running on time, leaving Easton at ten and a half o'clock, and was running at the rate of twenty-five miles per hour. After leaving Easton I went into the back end of the middle car, and taking a seat some three or four seats from the door, laid down to sleep, with my head on my carpet bag. I had but just assumed this position when the terrific crash came. Quicker than thought I found myself buried beneath a mass of ruins, bound hand and foot. My first sensation was that the car had run off the track, and was being dragged at a furious rate across the ties. Half stunned and stupefied by the shock I commenced to struggle for relief, all the time experiencing a sensation as if impelled along at a rapid rate. This was undoubtedly owing to the fact of my head being near the boiler of the engine from which the steam was escaping with a loud roar. By this time I had relieved my hands and one of my feet, and by making violent struggles, succeeded in relieving the other foot, and began to crawl upward among the ruins. The night was very dark and I was surrounded by the dead and dying, clasping me on all sides. I made my way through the top of the car, only to witness a terrible scene, which God forbid I should ever witness again. I saw that we had been precipitated from a stone abutment 30 feet high into the water, and among the charred ruins of a bridge.

As one of my hands was useless, and not knowing how deep the water might be, I remained in this position some five minutes, during which the groans of the dying and screeches of wounded for relief, only were to be heard. . . . I was enabled to escape from my position onto a sand bar in the middle of the river, and commenced to labor for the relief of the wounded. . . . Out of about one hundred persons contained in the two passenger cars, there were but three or four of us who were able to render assistance to the wounded. Dispatching a messenger to St. Joseph for relief, we continued to labor for four long hours. . . . We built fires on the ends of the abutments as signals to approaching trains, and also a large fire at the right of the precipice . . . so that we might be enabled to work effectually in taking out the dead and wounded. At this point a new horror was added to the scene—the cry went forth, "The train is on fire," from at least twenty voices, mostly confined to the lower part of the ruined mass. I rushed across the stream to the northern bank, and the first person I saw standing was Capt. Carpenter . . . covered with blood from head to foot, and presenting a frightful appearance. I recognized him, and shouted to him, "For God's sake, put out that fire." With a heroism I shall never forget, [he] rushed to the water's edge, and seizing the hat of a dead man by his side, commenced to throw water on the fire, and did it vigorously until it was extinguished. . . . Soon after we heard the whistle of the train from St. Joseph, which it seems had been delayed for an hour or more, to repair a bridge two miles back, which had but recently been lighted by the torches of the fiends. The train soon came up, bringing a large number of citizens, and relief. . . . Wet and exhausted, I crawled up the bank of the river, and resting a few moments by the fire, found my limbs so stiff that I was unable to render any further assistance, other than to point out to those just

> arrived the location of those still entangled in the wreck. A hundred men were now at work—the dead were rapidly taken out, and daylight broke upon the scene as if to intensify the horrors of the night. Both the dead and the wounded were taken upon the train, and in an hour more . . . we were ready to move for St. Joseph, carrying with us thirteen dead bodies, and about seventy-five wounded, and doubtless leaving some of the dead still buried in the ruins at the place of the disaster.*

Because of acts such as this, as well as those committed against Unionists still living in the state, the punishment levied on Missouri by the Kansas Jayhawkers was certain to be swift. And with memories of "old scores" from the territorial days left unsettled, the coming retribution would undoubtedly prove bloody as well.

*In the interests of clarity and consistency we have edited some of the excerpts, regularizing spellings and punctuation and supplying missing words.

2.

THE BESOM OF DESTRUCTION

"That little fellow. . . ," said a man on the streets of Lawrence as he nudged a stranger nearby, "he don't look like a savage . . . ! Lord . . . let him get among the Secessionists once!"

The man being singled out was "Doc" Jennison. True, Jennison did not look like a "savage." Nor did he seem a fit candidate to play a leading role in the coming border war. A physician from New York, a latecomer to the Kansas troubles, he was in stature short and slender, his habits were coarse and crude, and when the little redhead doffed his tall fur cap to the ladies, his greased hair stood on end like "an enraged porcupine." Also, his intelligence was suspect. Jokes about his literacy, his "smarts," were legendary, and one newspaper reported that the bandy-legged braggart had once offered a $100 reward for a lost $500 note.

Whatever his failings, Charles Jennison was by 1861 the most popular man in Kansas, and although he indeed did not look like one he was, in fact, a genuine savage. His tenure in Kansas had been relatively brief. Jennison had more than made up for lost time, however, and his reputation as a Jayhawker was second to none. He more than any had been instrumental in running pro-slavery settlers out of southern Kansas. Those individuals who failed to heed his first warning to "clear out" normally did not live to heed a second.

Soon after hostilities officially commenced in 1861, Jennison and his gang—known variously as the Mound City Sharp's Rifles, the Southern Kansas Jay-Hawkers, and the Seventh Kansas Cavalry—crossed the Missouri line and, with the U.S. flag flapping overhead, embarked upon a frenzy of looting, arson, and murder. Since many of the able-bodied men had left to join the forces under Sterling Price, Jennison had free play among the women, children, and old men that remained. Recalls one of his victims, Nannie Harris:

> One night . . . while the family was asleep, the door of Mrs. McC[orkle]'s room on the first floor was broken open and a squad of noisy [Jayhawkers]

Charles Jennison *Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka*

rushed into the apartment. The alarmed lady entreated them to retire until she could put on her clothes, but they cursed her and told her to get up pretty damn quick or they would prod her with their sabers. A bright fire was burning in the open hearth; the wretches took blazing brands and carried them about as they ransacked the closets, dresser drawers and trunks. A little girl, who was sleeping with her mother, was awakened by the unusual noise and began to cry, and one of the men went to her and, holding a saber against her face, told her if she uttered another sound he would cut her head off. The poor little thing was so frightened and subdued that she did not speak a word for days.

The young girls who were asleep upstairs were aroused by the disturbance below, hastily dressed and ran to their mother's room. The outlaws then turned their attention to the girls, using insulting terms, searched their persons for valuables, all the while singing ribald songs or telling obscene jokes. They took from a pocket in the housemaid's petticoat forty dollars, tearing her apparel from her person. The creatures made the girls go before them as they searched every apartment in the house, from which they purloined every article of value they could carry. Then returning downstairs three of the wretches took by force three of the girls into the yard and marched back and forth in the moonlight, making most vicious threats and insinuations. . . . After several hours of this atrocious conduct the creatures started away. . . .

Gray-headed planters, the respected pillars of their communities, were dragged from their palatial homes to cook, chop wood, and run menial errands wherever the Kansans camped. Younger men, caught unawares in Jennison's path, were not so lucky. Some were wrestled to the ground and held fast while the little Jayhawker drew his knife and personally sliced off their ears. Others fared even worse. In passing one woman's home, Jennison called her husband out and, according to the wife,

> without much parleying, [he] ordered his boys to string him up on his own piazza. In spite of [my] entreaties and crying a rope was fastened to his neck, and with the other end thrown over a beam, he was jerked several feet into the air. As his neck was not broken, he struggled violently for release, when Jennison ordered two of his men to jump upon him and break his neck. This was done. . . .

Moving north, Jennison's gang struck for the heart of secession sentiment in western Missouri.

> God's wrath hangs over Jackson County. God's people have been ruthlessly driven from it, and you will see the day when it will be visited by fire and sword. The Lord of Hosts will sweep it with the besom of destruction. The fields and farms and houses will be destroyed, and only the chimneys will be left to mark the desolation.

Thus spoke Mormon prophet Joseph Smith in 1838 shortly after he and his followers were cast out of Jackson County by enraged Missourians. Smith must have had Charles Jennison in mind when he made the prophecy, for it was here at Kansas City, Independence, and Westport that many of the Border Ruffian raids on Kansas originated during the territorial days, and it was here that the mailed fist of war would fall hardest. In a letter to her mother, Margaret Hays of Westport wrote:

> We have been overrun with Jayhawkers . . . and they have robbed and harassed us, and our neighbors have suffered a great deal from them. Uncle Jimmie has lost upwards of ten thousand dollars worth; they came to his house one night and took eight negroes, a fine carriage, a two-horse wagon, some horses and mules, and robbed his house of all bed clothing and everything valuable. In a few days they came to the same house, took about seventy head of sheep and 45 or 50 head of the finest stock there was in the county. In a few days after they went to another neighbor some two miles off, took the negroes, went to the beds and rolled them up saying they would take them to their wives. The same day they took some thirty head of stock from Uncle Lemme's. . . . The next day . . . twenty Jayhawkers came to our nearest neighbors with ten wagons and said they came to take everything the old man had. Some went into the house packing up, some in the orchard, some fixing to load up wheat, some had all the stock driven up. . . . In the evening fifty-three of them came to our house and surrounded it. I met them on the portico and invited them in. They said they came to take everything we had and burn us out. I asked the leaders into my room. I talked nicely to them, and after a time they told me they would not rob my house but would take everything else they could find out doors. The men that were left to guard the house taunted me every way they could to get me to say something. I never noticed them only when they would ask some questions, and would answer them as kindly and in the mildest way I could. They took two wagons loaded full from here, my carriage, and every negro on the place. Eleven I had. . . . It was very aggravating to see it driven up to the door and to see negroes jump into it and drive off. . . . I am looking every hour for everything I have to be taken, and my house destroyed by these Jayhawkers.

Several miles to the north lay Kansas City, home to some seven thousand souls. The Jayhawkers swarmed into town, looting houses and shops, running secessionists into the woods, and insulting, beating, and terrorizing those who remained. Penned a Jayhawker from nearby Camp Union, September 1861:

> Kansas City is silent. . . . The tables are turned now; and here in camp are many Kansas men who were hunted in '55 and '56 by the Border Ruffians who rode, booted and spurred, over our State. They are now entering this State to settle up old scores . . . and bless the world with a Christian civilization.

A short time later, with the addition of a company of armed Negroes led by a black officer, Jennison set his regiment in motion toward Independence, ten miles east of Kansas City. Fletcher Pomeroy, a Kansan riding in the column farther back, jotted down in his diary:

> Company H was advance guard, marching about one fourth of a mile in advance of the main column. . . . As we marched along, we suddenly discovered a building on fire a short distance in advance. As we approached we saw that it was a grist mill. . . . We wondered how it got afire, but we soon learned. We had gone but a little further when a turn in the road brought us in sight of a house. Women and children were fleeing to the woods while members of our advance guard were smashing in the windows and firing the house. Across the street were several stacks of wheat and oats; those were also fired.

After torching the remaining homes along the road, Jennison finally reached Independence. A regimental correspondent continues:

> Upon our approach no enemy was to be seen. The streets were almost forsaken. The command was divided into three divisions, and entered the town at a good speed. Men were stationed at the four corners of the public square to guard the streets while other squads . . . were engaged in bringing men, horses, wagons and carriages, which were easily found. The [citizens] were put inside of the public square, there to await an examination. After the men . . . were collected, and the companies had fallen in ranks and formed about the square, the examination began. The secessionists were separated from the Union men, and to the latter were given property, which had been collected. This sifting process was continued until the crowd inside the square was narrowed down to a very small number. . . . Colonel Jennison then read his proclamation to the small assembly of traitors, after which he made them a very handsome speech. . . . He told them that he had the names of all the men of secession tendencies, and that he knew them. Their names were all written down, and there was no use for them to talk Union one day and act Secession the next. . . . He told them that he had been sent among them to protect the Government property . . . and that if one of the Union men of Independence was molested, the secessionists shall pay ten times for the injury done him, and that if they permitted . . . secession leaders to bring [their men] into town without raising objection and doing their best to prevent it Independence would be leveled to the ground. . . .

Jennison thereupon lent force to his words by ransacking the stores and shops of the town and burning a home. "The command returned to camp," concluded the correspondent, "all satisfied that a good day's work had been done. . . ."

A short time later Jennison struck south. In the words of renowned artist and Missouri Unionist George C. Bingham:

> His entire route from Independence to Westpoint may be traced by the ruins of the dwellings of our citizens, which were first pillaged and then burned without discrimination or mercy. As they were generally constructed of wood, they are now but heaps of ashes, above which the tall chimneys remain in their mute solitude.

Although Jennison was the most notorious, other Kansas Jayhawkers shared the Missouri spoils with him. Newly elected U.S. Senator James Henry Lane, a free-state fighter from the territorial days, wasted no time in taking charge of a large group of Jayhawkers. The spoken word was Lane's specialty, and his power over men had become legendary. In the words of one listener:

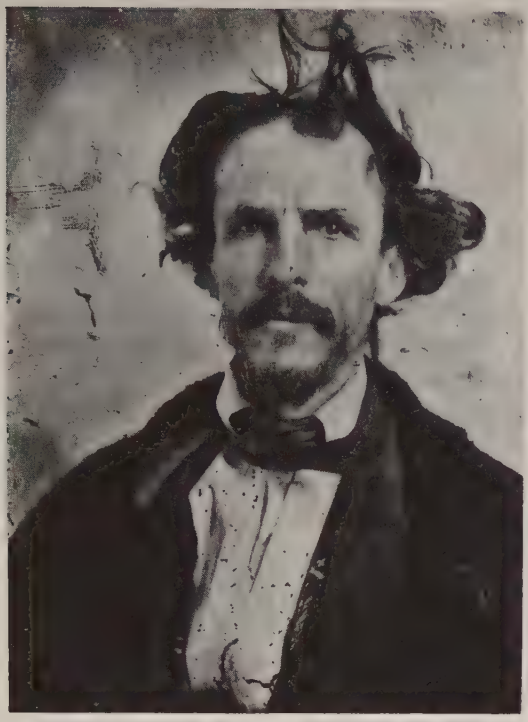
> His oratory was voluble and incessant, without logic, learning, rhetoric or grace. . . . His voice is a series of transitions from the broken screams of a maniac to the hoarse, rasping gutturals of a Dutch butcher in the last gasp of inebriation; the construction of his sentences is loose and disjointed; his diction is a pudding of slang, profanity and solecism; and yet the electric shock of his extraordinary eloquence thrills like the blast of a trumpet.

Lured by Lane and his free-rein reputation, recruits poured in, not only from Kansas but from other Western states as well. The pro-Southern editor of the Weston *Argus* contemptuously looked on as "fifty-two ragamuffins and cut-throats" passed through the streets on their way to join Lane with, as the Missourian cynically noted, "the hope . . . of getting some clean clothes and something to eat." The editor continues:

> They were nearly naked, and minus shoes and hats in many cases. They were not armed, but a number of them had hams of meat on their backs, which they no doubt had stolen from some man's meat house on the road. These are the kind of men that Lane's Brigade is to be composed of—thieves, cut-throats, and midnight robbers. These hirelings passed through town on a full trot, their eyes looking as big as new moons, as they expected at every corner to be stopped or fired on by the rebels. On a dark night such soldiers would make a splendid charge on a hen-roost, meat house, negro kitchen or stable—but they can't fight honest Americans in daylight.

Following the Southern victory at Wilson's Creek on August 10, 1861, and after Sterling Price's triumphant rebel army had safely passed north on its way to invest and capture the river port of Lexington, Lane and his Jayhawkers slipped into Missouri. The command, which numbered roughly 1,500 men and which Lane proudly dubbed the "Kansas Brigade," was little more than a mob of thieves and adventurers. Soon after crossing the border, the Kansans went on a looting and burning rampage.

Late in September, Lane reached the outskirts of Osceola, the metropolis of southwest Missouri. In the words of Mrs. M. E. Lewis:



James Henry Lane
Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka

> We learned that . . . an army from Kansas was approaching, and at about 12 o'clock at night a neighbor waked us up to tell us they could be heard coming. . . . I called our daughter, and we prepared to watch them from the window. It was a clear moonlight night—we could see them plainly and hear them talking. They passed our house on horseback, their guns glistening in the moonlight. When their front had passed us some three hundred yards, and the roadway filled with horsemen as far back as we could see, suddenly a company under Captain J. M. Weidemeyer fired upon them from the brush. They wheeled and galloped back up the road without firing a shot. Then a piece of artillery was run down and fired upon Weidemeyer's men. They returned the fire and drove the artillerymen away; soon their mounted men came down the road again and were again driven back. Weidemeyer hearing them forming dismounted, took a few men and crawled close to them and again fired on them. We heard a tremendous volley of musketry, and soon . . . all opposition was gone.

A correspondent with the Kansas Brigade continues:

> This was the last we saw of the enemy. . . . Our men slept upon their arms that night. The first object that greeted their eyes as they came in sight of town [next morning] was a large secession flag floating over the court house. It was supposed the enemy was fortified there. Capt. [Thomas] Moonlight

was ordered to send over some of his feelers [i.e., artillery rounds], and ascertain the facts. The enemy was not there. We then carefully and slowly felt our way into town. Every place of ambush was thoroughly searched, but the rebels had fled. The town had scarcely an inhabitant, except women and children. It had been reported that Osceola was thoroughly infested with the leprosy of treason; that it had been a place of rendezvous for the rebels, and a place of deposit for their ammunition and provisions. A little search discovered a large amount of lead—many tons—cartridge paper, some powder, and a place where cartridges had been made, clothing and provisions for the rebel army. . . . The question then came up in reference to the disposition that should be made of the rebel town. The subject was earnestly discussed by the officers. Col. [William] Weer favored sparing the town—the others decided to burn it. . . . Here we come to the horrors of war. They surpass all description. . . . There are men whose souls are feasted and glutted with delight at the sight of distracted women, weeping children, and burning cities.

While hundreds of shouting Jayhawkers ran through the streets looting homes, shops, and barns, officers, in an effort to prevent the men from getting drunk, tried to destroy large stocks of liquor in the town. Although 150 barrelheads were quickly staved in, many Kansans nevertheless succeeded in filling their canteens and themselves. Adds William Johnson, son of a U.S. senator whose own stately home was destroyed:

The Yankees then loaded all the wagons they could find in Osceola and the vicinity with goods from the stores, and records from the court house, and then burned the court house, and the business houses and most of the residences, and would have burned them all, but for the fact that some of their scouts reported the approach of Confederate troops—a report which was not true. They then made a hasty exit. . . .

"As the sun went down Sunday night," concluded the brigade correspondent, "Osceola was a heap of smoldering ruins." Three thousand people were left homeless when Osceola was burned, and perhaps the fairest city in Missouri had been utterly wiped from the face of the earth.

"You must march so that traitors will *feel* the difference between loyalty and disloyalty," shouted Lane as his brigade set off on a circuitous sweep of the border. Good to his word, Lane followed through. Noted a reporter for the New York *Daily Times*:

I found all through Western Missouri a deadly horror entertained towards Lane. . . . Everywhere that he has been, he carried the knife and torch with him, and has left a track marked with charred ruins and blood. An old man told me his story—told with composure, while he said that they had taken his horses, mules, grain, his wife's dresses, and then fired the log shanty that afforded his gray hairs shelter from the pelting rain and nipping frosts. He told all this in detail with a firm voice, but when he added: "They even stole

the clothes of my little dead grandson," his lip trembled convulsively a moment, and then the hot tears gushed from his eyes. . . .

Yet another Jayhawker at work in Missouri was James Montgomery, an old friend and follower of John Brown. Slashing and burning their way down the line, Montgomery's men became some of the most ruthless raiders on the border. A correspondent of the Lawrence *Republican* describes a typical foray:

> Our eagles first pounced upon Papinsville, and . . . the town went up in smoke and flame. As we passed through the country . . . the houses, barns, mills and other property of rebels were brought to the altar and full atonement made. . . . Capt. [John E.] Stewart paid his compliments to Butler . . . and the business part of that once thriving and pleasant village was burned to the ground. . . . Gen. Lane's expeditions in comparison with this were visitations of mercy.

On September 17, Montgomery's band broke camp for a raid on Morristown, Missouri. Learning that a group of citizens had formed to defend the town, Montgomery and Col. Hampton Johnson plotted strategy. A newspaper correspondent with the column reveals what happened:

> The plan of attack was this: Col. Johnson, with two companies of cavalry and one mountain howitzer, was to start about two hours in advance; make a detour around the town, and take a position on the east to cut off retreat, while Col. Montgomery, with the balance of the command, was to come up from the west and make the attack, which was to be the signal for Johnson to attack also. . . . Col. Johnson started about two hours in advance of the remainder of the force, made a circuitous march, but came into town on a road that brought his command in at the west end of the town, precisely where Montgomery was to commence the attack, and without waiting for the latter, charged into the camp of the enemy, taking them by surprise and putting them to a precipitous flight, leaving most of their horses, wagons, tents, camp equipage, &c. Soon the force within the buildings commenced a fire upon our men who were securing secesh horses, &c. Col. Johnson gave the order to fall back, but before it could be done, fell from his horse dead, his only exclamation being: "Oh, my dear wife. . . ." J. M. Copeland was killed instantly by a charge right through the head, making a hole two inches in diameter.

Angered by the death of his two men, when Montgomery finally arrived and scattered the defenders, he torched the town and then placed three captives before a drumhead court-martial. Jayhawker Joseph Trego continues in his diary:

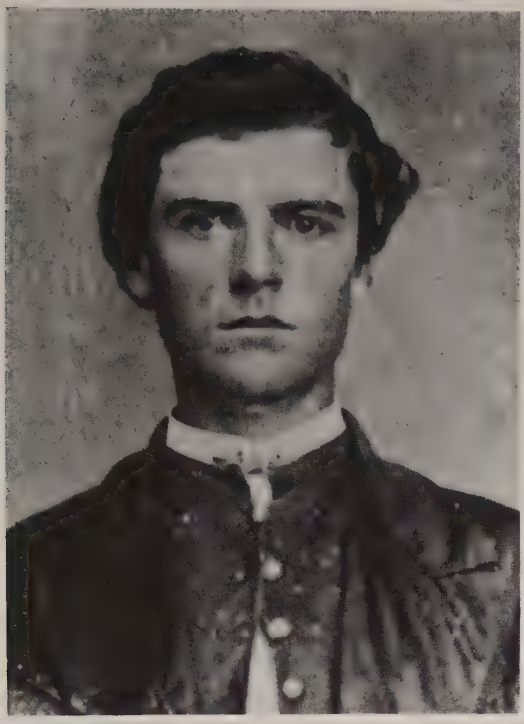
> While we were trying the prisoners some scouts brot in six men who were coming to the camp ignorant of the fact that the rebels had been routed.

> Two of the men were rebels & were bringing in 4 Union men as prisoners. Their prisoners were of course, set at liberty and [the Missourians] were taken out and shot with the others who after trial were sentenced to execution. They were all buried in one grave.

Increasingly, as at Morristown, citizens banded together in an effort to protect their communities. Others went a step further and, in a spirit of revenge, some even made raids of their own into Kansas. In late autumn 1861, John Clem of Bates County led a posse across the line, reclaiming stolen property along Mine Creek and killing three Jayhawkers in the process. On the night of December 11, Clem and his Missourians returned, this time to the village of Potosi. What happened next is related by the daughter of Joseph Seright:

> It was a bright moonlight night, almost like daylight. After retiring my mother heard shooting. When she heard this . . . she tried to induce my father to leave the house and go to where my brother Isaac . . . and his brother-in-law . . . were hiding, but he was not well physically, having chills and fever, and after arising and dressing remarked he was feeling so badly he did not care to lay out in the cold and damp and perhaps they would not come. . . . So he lay down on the bed fully dressed. The next thing we knew they were pounding on the door for admittance. As soon as mother opened the door they rushed in and filled the room, middle aged men and a lot of boys not over twelve or fourteen years of age. Mother asked, "Who are you?" They replied: "We are Texas Rangers." My father in the meantime had stepped into a side kitchen. There seemed to be two leaders in the gang—one stood at the bedside of my sister-in-law . . . who was recovering from a serious siege of pneumonia, and prevented others from stealing bed-covers from her bed. All other blankets, quilts, coverlids, etc., were taken by them. A part of the crowd going into the kitchen discovered my father, bringing him back into the room, thence out into the yard. As they brought him through the room my mother said: "Surely you would not hurt him." The other leader answering: "Not one hair of his head shall be injured. . . ." By this time they had taken all they wanted from the house and now departed, all mounting, riding off, except one; my father yet standing in the door. . . . The man left behind threw his gun over his saddle as if in the act of mounting, pointed toward our father, shooting him, killing him almost instantly. After he did this he mounted and as he was riding away a man came rushing back, asking angrily, "Why in hell did you do that?—didn't I order you not to shoot?"

Unlike the sweeps up Mine Creek, the raids on the Kansas villages of Gardner, Aubrey, Chilicothe, and Humboldt were largely bloodless affairs and, although traumatic to those affected, they accomplished little and had virtually no impact on the Jayhawkers, who continued with their program of dismantling West Missouri.



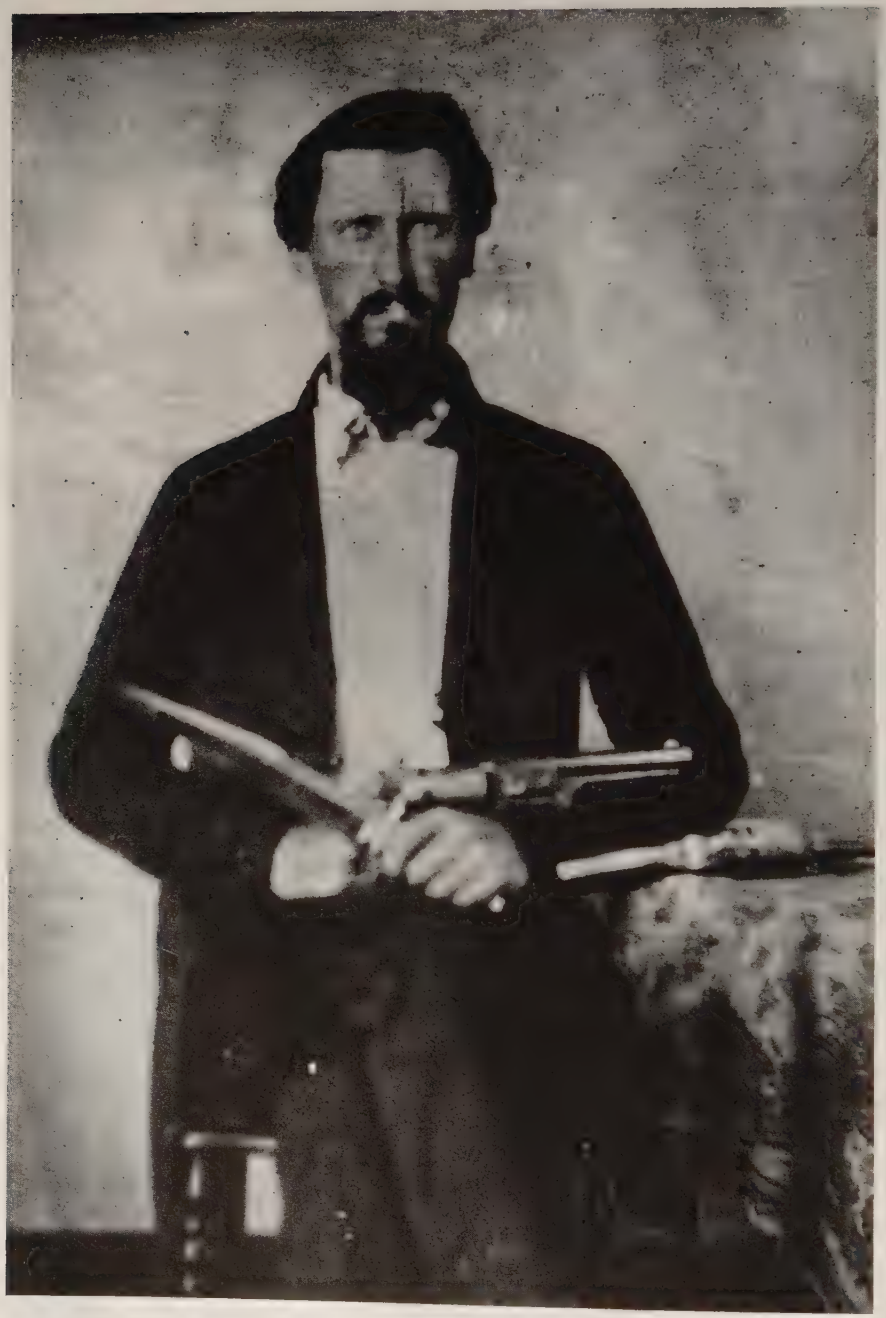
William F. Cody
Denver Public Library, Western History Department

Taking their cue from the larger, Federally sanctioned organizations, smaller, independent gangs of Jayhawkers sprang up all along the Kansas border. In a letter to his brother, Peter Bryant openly admits why he chose the freebooting life:

> I received from Gov. [Charles] Robinson a commission as 1st Lieutenant of [Kansas Militia]. In July our Captain raised a company and went into the army, and I mustered about 50 men and went into Missouri. All the difference between us was he jayhawked under cover of Uncle Sam and I under a lieutenancy from Governor R. I marched when I damned pleased; he when he was told to. I kept my plunder (if I chose); he didn't. I took my pay as I went along; he, when he could get it. I have disbanded my squad; he has got to stick her till war is over.

Another Jayhawker who opted to wage a "self-sustaining" war was William F. Cody. In the words of the future "Buffalo Bill":

> A man by the name of Chandler proposed that we organize an independent company for the purpose of invading Missouri and making war on its people on our own responsibility. He at once went about it in a very quiet way, and succeeded in inducing twenty-five men to join him. . . . His plan was that we should leave our homes in parties of not more than two or three together, and meet at a certain point near Westport . . . on a fixed day. His



Marshall Cleveland *Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka*

instructions were carried out to the letter and we met at the rendezvous at the appointed time. Chandler had been there some days before us, and, thoroughly disguised, had been looking about the country for the whereabouts of all the best horses. He directed us to secretly visit certain farms and collect all the horses possible, and bring them together the next night. This we did, and upon reassembling it was found that nearly every man had two horses. We immediately struck out . . . and as soon as we had set foot upon Kansas soil we separated with the understanding that we were to meet one week from that day at Leavenworth.

Some of the parties boldly took their confiscated horses into Leavenworth, while others rode them to their homes. This action may look . . . like horse-stealing, and some people might not hesitate to call it by that name; but Chandler plausibly maintained that we were only getting back our own, or the equivalent, from the Missourians. . . . So we didn't let our consciences trouble us very much. We continued to make similar raids on the Missourians off and on during the summer. . . .

Many who joined Jayhawking bands were nothing more than common criminals. Marshall Cleveland and his gang of thinly-veiled patriots brazenly worked both sides of the border, robbing and murdering Unionist and rebel alike. A former follower of Jennison, Cleveland soon broadened his range to include bank robbery and counterfeiting, as well as the wholesale plundering of emigrant wagon trains. Even in the tumultuous climate of the border, such flagrant outlawry could not go unchecked for long, and a correspondent for the Lawrence *State Journal* described what happened when Federal troops finally closed in on Cleveland:

He had recently come down from the northern part of the State, bringing a woman with him, who he passed off for his wife. They stopped . . . in Osawatomie, and were accompanied by a number of "tools," who executed promptly the orders of their leader. It is said some twenty-five or thirty desperadoes, clothed in the garb of U.S. soldiers, were in the neighborhood at the time. . . .

Capt. [Harris S.] Greeno . . . sent out a couple of scouts to watch the movements of Cleveland, and being satisfied they had him in their grasp . . . a detachment of ten soldiers were sent forward, under the command of Lieut. [Anson] Walker, to "bag the game," and bring it into camp.

Surrounding the town during the night, they closed in upon it in the morning, and found Cleveland . . . at the hotel. —He stated emphatically to Lieut. Walker that he would not be taken alive. After much parleying he passed to his *woman* $300 in change, which he had in his pocket, and said if allowed to go to the house of Mr. Chestnut he would give himself up. He was allowed to start, but it seems that some previous arrangements had been made with a portion of his band, for soon after appearing in the street, a saddled

horse was furnished him, on which he sprang and rode for the valley of the Pottawatomie. Lieut. Walker's detachment joined in pursuit, firing occasional shots at him, all to no purpose.—Reaching the bed of the stream, it seems he dismounted from his horse, when he partially hid himself under a steep bank, and, with cocked revolver, awaited the arrival of his pursuers. . . .

As [Private John T.] Johnson was riding along the bank he discovered Cleveland under the same, and partly concealed by the roots of a tree. Each drew his revolver, but Johnson, it seems, was the coolest, for he aimed and fired, almost perpendicularly downwards, towards Cleveland, the ball entering the right shoulder near the neck, passing through the heart and out just above the left hip.

Cleveland seemed conscious for a few moments, for others coming up, and leveling their pieces at him, he said: "O don't, boys!" and, gasping, died!

During the winter of 1861–1862, the Kansas Jayhawkers renewed their efforts in Missouri, and the various outlaw bands went on a rampage of theft, arson, and murder. None displayed more ferocity nor reached greater heights of savagery than Jennison's regiment, now led by his second-in-command, Daniel Anthony, brother of abolitionist Susan B. Anthony.

At dawn on New Year's Day, 1862, Anthony and his men fell upon the defenseless town of Dayton. Of the forty-seven homes in the place, all were fired but one. The following week the village of Columbus was looted and burned to the ground, and later that night, January 8, the raiders rode into Pleasant Hill. Revealed townsman George Miller, in a letter to his parents: "Anthony . . . took away ten thousand dollars worth of stock & 55 negroes. This is the third time the Kansas troops have been in our town & carried away not less than 150 thousand dollars worth of property. The country is being ruined."

Moving on and camping near the partially destroyed hamlet of Morristown, the Jayhawkers soon completed the job. "There are only five houses standing now," wrote William S. Moorhouse to a Kansas newspaper. "I think when we leave it, it will be known only by name. . . . I am inclined to think that the secesh suffered *some* while we were among them, for you could see smoke in all directions."

Elsewhere, as Anthony and the regiment swept on, the entire countryside about them went up in flames. In the region around Kingsville, said an eyewitness, "I counted one evening, while standing on Brushy Knob, one hundred and sixty houses on fire." Near the town itself eight helpless prisoners were mowed down in cold blood, while a ninth escaped with only his ears cropped.

From Lexington, in late January 1862, carriage-maker Willard Mendenhall wrote in his diary:

This is a reighn of terror. Jennyson's regiment is in the neighbourhood. I am told they have burned two hundred private residences and shot several men. . . . Miss Nancy Pitcher tells us of horrible deeds committed . . . in Jackson county. Several of her relations have had thare houses burned by them, thare negros, hoarses and everything they had taken from them. They have taken the lives of boys ten years old. They went in the house of David Porter. His daughter was sick in bed. They striped the clothes off the bed, stole what they wanted and set fire to the house.

To the Jayhawkers themselves, the march through Missouri had become more sport than war. In a letter to his girlfriend back in Illinois, Webster Moses reveals:

When we were at Lone Jack . . . about 10 of us went out jayhawking. We went before breakfast and stopped at a rich secesh and told them we wanted some breakfast. While they were getting breakfast we caught their horses and took the best ones. When we came to breakfast they did not have dishes enough. The negroes sayed that they had them hid. We asked the Gentleman where they were and he told us. We found some silver ware among the rest. I got the cupps, two silver Ladles and two sets spoons. They sayed that the spoons belonged to the children and I gave them back. I gave Downing one ladle and the other to Capt. Merriman. . . . Some of the boys got in some places about $100.00 worth of silver and some got considerable money.

Although it may have seemed more sport than war, the "game" did have its peril, as the journal of Fletcher Pomeroy makes clear:

Two of our men who were acting as scouts were shot last night. They had called at a house just outside of our lines in the early evening. The family, a man and his wife and grown daughter, offered them refreshments which they gladly accepted. They appeared very friendly and pressed the boys to stay overnight. As a good fire in a large fire-place and the offer of a good bed was more attractive on a stormy night than such accommodations as an outdoor camp afforded, and under the effects of peach brandy which was freely furnished them, they threw off their usual caution and fell into the trap which was so cunningly laid for them. After a pleasant hour or two the daughter left the room. Sometime later the parents excused themselves for a time. Almost immediately shots were fired in through the window and from doors which were entered by the enemy. One of the men was killed. The other one was badly wounded in the left shoulder, but succeeded in escaping out into the darkness and into the woods. The firing was heard in camp and a detachment was hurried out, but as the enemy had fled and all was quiet, they found nothing. The wounded man, after keeping low until he thought he could venture out, came into camp a bit before daylight.

A company was sent out to the place at once. The dead comrade had been thrown out into the slush and had frozen down so that the body had to

be cut loose with an ax. The house was deserted. Feeling that the inmates had conspired to the death of our comrades, it was burned.

As was the case elsewhere, before the torch was applied this home was gutted of its contents. By the end of January 1862, much of the wealth of western Missouri had been stripped in a similar manner. Sometimes in single carts, but often in wagon trains several miles long, the plunder-filled caravans crossed the line into Kansas to be distributed among the people or auctioned off to the highest bidder in Lawrence, Leavenworth, Wyandotte, or Fort Scott.

Had the wagons rolling west hauled only the loot of secessionists, the federal government would have said little. In their zeal to punish and despoil Missouri, however, the Jayhawkers, dressed in blue and flying the Stars and Stripes, had made little effort to winnow the loyal from the disloyal. What happened to Lizzie Brannock's family at Chapel Hill was repeated over and over again throughout western Missouri:

> Jennison and his gang came upon us stripped us of nearly everything and would have burned us out but for proving that we were Union and had never done anything against the government. . . . They burned 150 houses, helpless women and young children sick were taken out and left standing in the snow while all they owned on earth save the Land was destroyed before their eyes. . . . [Later] they came upon us while going a few miles from home [and] put me and my two children off . . . in the mud a good distance from any house.

As a result of raids such as this, many Missouri Unionists, Lizzie Brannock's revenge-minded husband included, ran off and eagerly joined the rebel forces. Too late, high-ranking Federal officers realized the havoc the Jayhawkers had wrought. In the words of Maj. Gen. Henry Halleck, commander of the Department of the West:

> They are no better than a band of robbers; they cross the line, rob, steal, plunder, and burn whatever they can lay their hands upon. They disgrace the name and uniform of American soldiers. . . . The course pursued by those under Lane and Jennison, has turned against us many thousands who were formerly Union men. A few more such raids . . . will make [Missouri] as unanimous against us as is Eastern Virginia.

By March 1862 most of the Jayhawkers had departed Missouri, and troops from other Northern states moved in to take their place. Although small, sanctioned gangs of Unionist "scouts," including the murderous "Red Legs," led by George Hoyt, continued their depredations in Missouri, the day of free-roving, large-scale raids from Kansas was over. Federal pressure from Washington played a role. For the most part, though, western Missouri had ceased to be profitable. There was little left to steal. In

scarcely ten months a once bounteous, beautiful land had been transformed into a wilderness. Earlier in the winter a Kansas soldier, John A. Martin, penned a letter to his sister, and although he was describing the area around Westpoint, Martin might well have been writing about almost any community along the Missouri border:

> The country around is a desolation; the ravages of war have laid waste the fields, and ruins mark the spot where once stood costly houses. . . . I have seen since coming down here, the effects of civil war terribly portrayed. Westpoint was once a thriving town, with large stores, elegant private dwellings, and a fine large hotel. Now soldiers are quartered in the dwellings and horses occupy the storerooms. The hotel was burned down three days ago. The houses are all torn to pieces, plastering off, mantles used to build fires, and doors unhinged. I presume the place will be burned as soon as the troops leave. All around it the same scenes of ruin and devastation greet the eye. Large farms, with crops ungathered, barns and stables falling to pieces, houses deserted, fences taken down, and stock running loose and uncared for. . . . From Westpoint to Jonesville I saw not a house occupied, and I have been all over the country about here without meeting with a half dozen habited dwellings.

"A wilderness of solitude . . . reigns supreme," wrote another Kansas soldier from Morristown. "It is my first view of war's terrors, and even my worst pictures of imagination are more than realized. Those who have never seen such desolation need never wish to."

And what of the people, the Missourians who formerly lived on this land? Murdered in cold blood, hundreds of old men and boys were beyond suffering. Thousands more, however, men, women, and children, had been despoiled, dispossessed, and driven to the winds. What Henry Palmer saw one morning along the state line was the true face of civil war:

> I was on duty as sergeant of the guard on picket nearly a mile from the main camp. It had been raining all night—a cold, drizzly . . . rain. At ten a.m. we saw a woman approaching from down the dreary, uninhabited roadway. She was on foot and was carrying a baby hugged to her breast, with four little children also walking—two boys and two girls, the oldest a girl of seven years. All were in their nightclothes and all wet to the skin; children crying and suffering with cold and hunger. . . . The babe was dead. . . . The mother died from this exposure within thirty-six hours. The four children were sent to four different homes.

"Old scores are all settled," laughed a Kansan after viewing the violent rape of western Missouri, "and with a tolerable fair interest." And so it was. With the secession army of Sterling Price driven into the wilds of Arkansas and with no large body of men to oppose them, the invasion of Missouri had been in the minds of most Kansans a mere "frolick." But al-

ready, although few were aware, retribution, like a building black storm, was rising over the border. It arose in the shape of one man. A stranger to the land, quiet, refined, reflective, he seemed out of place. And yet in this one man the war on the western border would find its true and most terrifying embodiment. Even his name had a strange, surreal sound—Quantrill!

3.

ONE DESPERATE MAN

On a cold kansas morning in March 1862, Abraham Ellis lay curled in his warm bed on the second floor of the Aubrey hotel. Stopping in the village the night before, Ellis was returning from a visit to Fort Leavenworth, where he had petitioned the military for protection of the Kansas border. Although little damage had been done thus far along the line, Ellis and other Kansans were concerned that after the Jayhawking forays of the year before, the coming spring would witness vengeful Missourians attempting to do the same in Kansas.

Before the war Ellis had been superintendent of schools near Paola, and in 1860 one of the instructors in his system had been a tall, fair-haired boy from Ohio named Bill Quantrill. Ellis had taken a shine to the good-natured youth. They spent many a night talking over subjects serious and not so serious. Since that time, however, his former protégé had made a name for himself in western Missouri as a leader of "regulators"—men who took the law into their own hands in an effort to curb the jayhawking and thievery that so wracked the region. It was just such bands led by his old friend Quantrill that Ellis and other Kansans were worried about. But the officers at Leavenworth had assured Ellis that there was no cause for alarm; large bodies of troops would be constantly passing up and down the border between the various forts, and the Missourians would be compelled to stay on their side of the line. And so, as the golden glow of dawn spread across the horizon this cold March morning, Abraham Ellis lay snug and secure in his warm bed at Aubrey, resting up for the final leg of his long journey home.

Suddenly, the peaceful dawn was shattered by the sound of galloping hooves. Wrote Ellis:

> I was awoke by the cry—The cutthroats are coming—But before I could dress the house was surrounded & they were yelling & screaming & swearing like devils. . . . There were five of us upstairs . . . & about thirty of them. . . . Before we had time to dress . . . the firing commenced. Those occupying the

lower rooms undertook to save themselves by flight, three of whom were shot and robbed; two were literally riddled with bullets. . . . All this time we were besieged in the house, the balls passing in all directions through it. . . . I was carelessly looking out at the window upstairs & Quantrill saw me through the window & gave me a dip—he made a good shot. . . . I was struck in the center of the forehead. . . . I fell & was supposed to be dead—the others then went downstairs & surrendered & in a few moments Quantrill & two others . . . came upstairs—each had a revolver in his hand—with the hammer raised. They were trembling . . . & Swearing like Devils. . . . I was lying on a mattress at the head of the stairs & . . . as soon as they got within about four feet of me they all pointed their revolvers at my head, with their fingers on the triggers—at last one of them bawled out—If you have any money God damn you give it to me in a minute or I'll blow you to *Hell*. . . . I handed him $250.00. . . . They then ordered me downstairs & said that I was not dead by a damned sight—I then crawled downstairs & was helped into a chair & in a few minutes Quantrill came downstairs & then recognized me & got a cloth and some water & washed my face & said he did it himself & was damned sorry for it—as I was one of the Kansas men he *did not* want to hurt—I then told him of my team & about fifty dollars worth of groceries that were there in the house. He said that he was . . . sorry for what he had already done & said that not one thing more of mine should be touched. . . . Soon after I fainted away & lay on the frozen ground about four hours senseless & motionless . . . & all who saw me pronounced me dead.

Although "it was Jayhawkers only that they were after," concluded Ellis, who made a miraculous recovery from his wound, seven Federal soldiers were captured, then paroled, and Lt. Reuben Randlett was led away by the Missourians as a prisoner.

Few Kansans realized it at the time, but the tide had turned at Aubrey. As was the case during the territorial days, the border war had moved west again. One of those who did see the terrible portent of this raid, as well as an earlier one on nearby Gardner, was John Francis of the Olathe *Mirror*. Incensed by what he viewed as a woeful lack of intelligence and energy on the part of the Union command, the irate editor angrily responded:

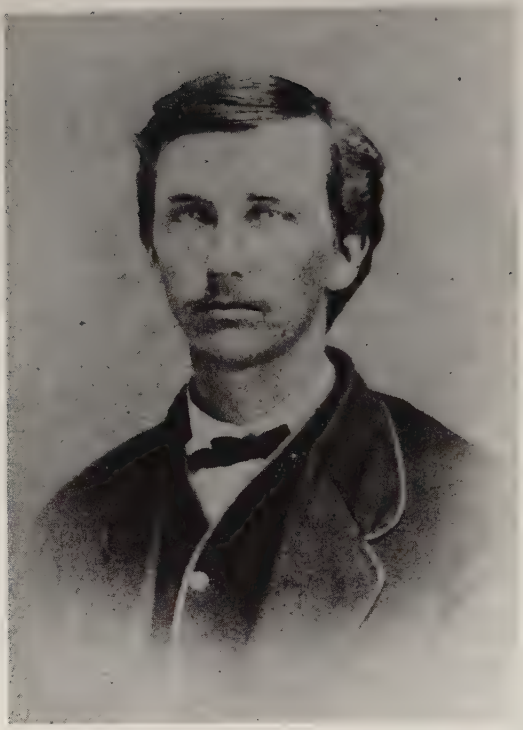
When Gardner was attacked and pillaged, the commander of the Department of Kansas sent a company of men there to protect it; when Aubrey was attacked by Quantrill, four of its citizens murdered and a large quantity of private property destroyed, the commander of the Department . . . sent a company of men there to protect . . . the town. The commander . . . must be a "Bully Commander." We will receive protection here after Quantrill pays us a visit, and kills about twenty men, then this "Bully Commander" . . . will send us a body of men for our protection. . . .

This method of protecting burned towns, dead bodies, and destroyed private property, don't suit us. . . .

Kansas should be protected—not the dead bodies, demolished towns and destroyed private property therein—but the elements "that are."

Aubrey was an auspicious beginning for Quantrill. Unfortunately for him and his men, that first raid into Kansas nearly proved their last. Embarrassed by the attack, spurred by critics such as Francis, Federal authorities were determined to crush out Quantrill and his band, lest their looming revolt spread. On the night of March 22, 1862, they got their chance. In the words of a Yankee cavalryman, Lt. Elias Stover:

> We marched in the direction of Little Santa Fe and arrived there about 11 p.m. . . . Major [James M.] Pomeroy with forty men . . . and thirty under myself, left the command at Santa Fe and marched eastward into Missouri with a guide who stated that he could take us to a house where the notorious "Quantrill" with a party of his men were stopping for the night. After marching about three miles through the brush and over the roughest road imaginable, our guide informed us that we were within a few rods of the house although nothing could be seen, it being quite dark. . . .
>
> The Major ordered all to dismount except every sixth man who was to remain mounted and hold horses and a guard of twelve men under my charge who was to ride forward and support him should he meet with any resistance.
>
> The night was quite cold and chilly, and we sat for more than thirty minutes shivering in our saddles anxiously awaiting the signal that was to bring us into action, when all of a sudden the clear report of firearms broke the stillness . . . and brought every man erect in his seat, and caused our horses to jump and prance as if eager for the engagement. I ordered my men forward with a gallop but before we reached the scene of action report after report rung out upon the still night air and informed us that our "boys" had stirred up a hot nest of rebels. . . . When I arrived I ascertained that the Major had surrounded the house with his men and ordered [the rebels] to open the doors when they answered him with a volley from within fatally wounding one of his men. . . . He instantly returned the fire and when I arrived both parties were at work in good earnest. We soon drove them from the windows and silenced their fire, when the Major ordered them to lay down their arms and they should be treated as "prisoners of war." We did not wish to fire on the house more than we could possibly help as there was a family in it. . . . The Major again ordered them to surrender. . . . [They] wanted some time to consider the proposition but they was told that they could not have a minute. . . . We were just ready to open fire on the house when they gave us a volley severely wounding Major Pomeroy and one of our horses. I went to the major's assistance and found that a rifle ball had passed completely through the thick of his thigh and that he was bleeding profusely (an artery being severed). With my handkerchief and revolver I girded his leg sufficiently to stop the flow of blood and had him removed out



William Quantrill
Carl W. Breihan Collection

of range of their fire. The fall of the Major so exasperated us that we determined to decide the matter at once, by firing the house. . . . Both ends and the front side of the house was logs; the back was light siding but had neither doors or windows in it. Consequently we did not guard it so strong as the other parts. We piled dry wood and lumber against the house and set it on fire and soon the whole building was in flames.

One of the guerrillas trapped inside, Morgan Mattox, continues:

Quantrill called the commander and asked if they were going to burn the place with the . . . family in it. The man said no, he would let them out. Firing stopped until they were gotten safely away, and we shut the door and went at it again. . . . One of the boys [Perry Hoy] said to Quantrill: "I would rather give up and let them shoot me than to be burned up alive."

So Quantrill told the soldiers that one of the men wanted to give up. . . . They stopped shootin' for him to get out. We put him out a window and started shootin' again.

The house was burning down on us. We had to give up or get out.

Desperately, the guerrillas kicked and pulled at the siding to the rear of the building in an effort to escape the flames. Eventually a hole large enough to slip through was opened. "Quantrill, with the rest of us, made

a rush to get away," continues Mattox. "To the boys' surprise Quantrill took the advance and we followed him, jumping right and left, right in the midst of [the] troopers. . . ."

In the bright glow of the burning home a short but fierce fight ensued, in which the guerrillas dashed single file for the nearby woods. Returning to Lt. Stover:

> The boys killed two of them as they were entering the brush. . . One [soldier] discharged his carbine and then clubbed it, and broke it in two pieces over one fellow's head, knocking him as "stiff as a mitten."
>
> We killed five inside of the house. . . . We also took all of their horses and saddles, twenty-six in number besides several revolvers, rifles and other arms. . . . We did not expect to meet with such resistance therefore we was not prepared for them. . . . Quantrill is a sharp desperate fellow, but he got in a tight place and got handled rather roughly and may thank his stars that he escaped with a whole head. One of the prisoners says that he was badly wounded in the house but I fear there is no truth in the statement.

There was, indeed, "no truth in the statement," but the lesson learned was one not soon forgotten. Never again would Quantrill be surrounded as he was that night near Little Santa Fe, for as events soon proved, surrender was out of the question.

Although the rules of war stated that non-uniformed hostiles, such as the Missouri guerrillas, were to be summarily executed when caught, Union officers along the border continued to exchange bushwhackers for their own men held captive or to parole the partisans upon their oath to never again take up arms against the federal government. This policy changed abruptly in the winter of 1861–1862, when official orders decreed that Missouri bushwhackers were not to be treated as prisoners of war; on the contrary, they were to be regarded as common highwaymen and shot or hanged out of hand when captured. Some field officers secretly mitigated the edict as circumstances dictated. Department of Kansas commander, Brig. Gen. James Blunt, however, enforced the new order religiously.

First blood of the no-quarter act came at Fort Leavenworth on July 28, 1862, where Perry Hoy found himself the center of attraction at a grim and solemn ceremony. A reporter for the Leavenworth *Daily Conservative* was on hand:

> The execution took place on the open field just south of the barracks. . . . The prisoner was marched on to the grounds by the soldiers; he wore a black suit and a felt hat; his arms were pinioned. Hoy was brought to the place where he was to be shot, made to kneel and his hat removed. In this position some clergyman asked the divine blessing. The prayer probably lasted ten minutes; it seemed a century. We did not hear what was said, but the

> sight of that poor creature kneeling there with loaded muskets before him and the delay prolonged and prolonged, as if he were to be killed by inches, was the most torturing we ever witnessed. Hoy was then marched back to the line of soldiers and his sentence read to him. After this he was placed on his knees again, and his eyes bandaged. He had maintained the utmost coolness throughout, but now his composure was forsaking him and his frail body swayed a little. There was no delay, no torture, no bungling in the military part of the program. A detachment of soldiers stood about twenty yards distant, and the moment the guard left the prisoner the command to fire was given—twelve volumes of fire leap from the rifles and Hoy is dead. He fell over upon his face and died without a struggle. One ball went through his head and two through his body. After an examination of his body . . . it was placed in a coffin and borne to the military burial ground. The soldiers marched off, the band playing a lively air.

Shortly after the execution, William Gregg, one of the first men to join Quantrill, happened to be quietly sharing a cabin hideaway with the leader. In Gregg's words:

> Quantrill was sitting at a table reading the paper. . . . Suddenly I saw a change in [his] countenance and the paper fell from his hand. Without saying a word, he drew a blank book from his pocket, penned a note on a leaf, folded and handed it to me, saying, "Give this to Andy." . . . He then told me that Hoy had been shot. Eager to see the purport of the note, I opened and read, "Take Lieut. Copeland out and shoot him. Go to Woodsmall's camp, get two prisoners and shoot them."

Referring to a time just prior to the Federal no-quarter edict, Gregg continues:

> We captured many of the enemy whom we universally paroled, Quantrill and his men vying with each other who should be most magnanimous toward prisoners. . . . At this date we had sixty men, twenty of whom had come to us only the day before, and when the [no-quarter] order was read and explained to them, these recruits left us. They were disgusted at the idea of being outlawed and the hoisting of the black flag by the enemy.

As the parole of Aubrey captive Lt. Randlett demonstrated, however, and despite the Federals' refusal to deal with him, Quantrill continued to seek an exchange of prisoners in hopes of preventing the struggle from degenerating into a savage war of extermination.

Although the unfurling of the black flag frightened away some recruits, Quantrill's company continued to grow. Because of the rampage of Lane, Jennison, Anthony, and others, many victims saw Quantrill as their only means of exacting revenge on the "tories" of Missouri and the Jayhawkers of Kansas. Every man had a story to tell. Wrote one young guerrilla:

I had absorbed the teachings of my father and was strong for the Union. I had decided that I would take no sides in the war . . . but that I would stay at home and help my father and mother. . . . One day father and I took a team and went to the timber for a load of wood. Upon our return home we found Colonel Jennison with his regiment of Jay-Hawkers . . . in full possession. They were killing our cattle for beef and loading wagons with bacon out of the smoke-house, as well as emptying the cribs of corn to feed their horses. Father went to Colonel Jennison and remonstrated with him for such conduct, and told him that he was a Union man and always had been, and wanted to know if that was the way he was to be treated by men claiming to be Federal soldiers. Jennison replied to him: "You are just like all of these damn Missourians. You claim to be strong Union men when we are around, but as soon as we are gone, you are secesh. We are going to take everything that we want in spite of your claims."

On going into the house, I found my mother lying on the bed and my sister trying to stop the flow of blood from a deep gash on her cheek and forehead. I asked her how she got hurt. She replied: "One of those negroes came in here and started upstairs. I caught hold of the door and told him that he had no business up there, as it was my daughter's room, with nothing in it that would be of any use to him. He caught hold of the door with both hands and gave it a violent jerk. The sharp edge of it struck me in the face, knocking me down." To say that it made me furious does not express the feelings that I had. As I stood there looking at the blood on her face, my whole feelings changed to hatred for any man that wore a blue uniform. . . . I made my decision there and then. I determined that I would avenge the treatment of my father and mother.

"They burned and took everything I had," said Hiram George, "killed my father, hung my brother."

Added Cole Younger: "The knowledge that my father had been killed in cold blood filled my heart with the lust for vengeance."

George Todd, Bill Anderson, Dick Yager, and dozens more came to Quantrill with similar stories of destroyed homes, murdered fathers, and abused mothers and sisters. Many who joined were teenagers drawn by tales of Quantrill's daring exploits. Expecting a hero of legendary proportions, what the newcomers found was, outwardly, at least, a young man very much like themselves. Remembered Frank James:

I will never forget the first time I saw Quantrill. He was nearly six feet in height, rather thin, his hair and moustache was sandy and he was full of life and a jolly fellow. He had none of the air of the bravado or the desperado about him. We all loved him at first sight. . . .

Said a woman following one hard-fought battle:

I saw Quantrill . . . after the fighting was over, when he rode to the house to look after his wounded. He looked as little like the horrible bloodthirsty

bandit . . . as it is possible to imagine. Instead of this, he was a modest, quiet, good-looking man, with blue eyes . . . , gentle of manner and courteous as well. . . .

Another young rebel who joined the company was James Campbell:

> Quantrill was the smartest man I ever knew. . . . He knew just what to do in every emergency. In camp, he was gentle. . . . [and] kind to his men and to prisoners whenever he had any.
>
> Quantrill never got excited, not even in a fight. He was as cool as a cucumber. . . . His men did not fear him, and there was only one offense for which he said he would have one of his followers taken out and shot.
>
> Quantrill gave orders that any member of his troop who insulted a woman should be shot. He said to us: "No matter how much a woman may abuse you, take her abuse. Let her talk and scold, but say nothing to her in resentment. We are fighting men, not women. No provocation will excuse an insult or back talk to a woman."

Much of Quantrill's success was due in part to geography. No region in America was better suited to guerrilla cavalry operations than western Missouri. "On the Kansas side of the line the border is principally prairie, across which the eye can reach in all directions," noted a correspondent of the New York *Daily Times* who accompanied one frustrated Federal patrol:

> When you enter Missouri, the face of it is entirely changed. The streams which run into the Missouri River head in close up to the border. All of the valleys are broken and densely wooded. In our late ride I rode through timbered hollows and ravines covered with thicket almost as dense as a Mexican chaparral—places in which five thousand men might hide, and an army march by the roads without knowing of their presence. . . . Our troops follow the roads mainly. The guerrillas follow the hog-paths through the woods, knowing every foot of ground, and able to evade us at every mile they traverse.

Broad belts of timber linked by large sweeps of prairie made the land ideal for sudden strikes and swift retreats.

Although the rugged Blackwater and Blue River country was a favorite haunt of many partisans, it was the Sniabar Hills, a "labyrinth of ravines, hills and hollows," seven miles wide by thirty long, that was the preferred haven of Quantrill. Infested as the area was with snakes, ticks, and flies, it was a rare Federal officer indeed who led a scout into the trackless waste of "the Sni."

Another element that contributed to the guerrillas' success was the choice of weapons. Although a bushwhacker might wield anything from a shotgun to a bowie knife, it was the relatively light, durable, and ex-

tremely accurate .36 caliber Colt Navy revolver that was preferred by most, with some men carrying four, five, even six in their belt. Armed with a carbine, a saber, and a single pistol, the Federal cavalryman was no match for the guerrilla in firepower.

Yet another advantage the partisan held over his adversary was in the quality of mount. From a region already noted for fine horses, the bushwhacker had the pick of Missouri's best. Most guerrillas had been raised in the saddle from youth, and thus horsemanship for them was already second nature by the time war began. Additionally, the constant companionship of man and beast created by the conflict made the two spiritually as one. In the words of an appreciative bushwhacker:

> There was some sort of affinity between a guerrilla and his horse. I have slept in my saddle and trusted my faithful horse to keep out of danger. I have sometimes, when alone and tired, dismounted, lay down in the grass or thicket, and left my horse on guard. I always found him there when I awoke. . . .
>
> Once my horse called me. I had been in the saddle nearly thirty hours. In that time the rain was incessant. I went to sleep under some branches on the ground. Under such conditions a man will sleep the sleep of the just. I was awakened by the shaking and breaking of the brush. My horse was pulling it from me. I was barely to the saddle when a lot of jayhawkers were upon me. But for my knowledge of the country I would not have escaped. I think I owe my life to my horse.
>
> I remember I spoke of this once to Quantrill, and he said it showed a horse appreciated a low voice, for the guerrilla was never known to speak otherwise; at least, not after he had been a guerrilla very long.

Throughout the summer Quantrill led his well-armed, well-mounted men from the Sni Hills to harass the Federal occupation forces in West Missouri. On the night of September 6, 1862, however, he and over one hundred partisans slipped unnoticed across the state line and entered hated Kansas. Soon after the crossing, three notorious Jayhawkers were dragged from their beds and murdered, two of the men riddled with bullets and the head of a third "crushed with a cannon ball." A few miles further found Quantrill on the outskirts of Olathe. Despite elaborate precautions earlier in the war, this bustling community of over a thousand now found itself totally unprepared for what was to come. Just before midnight, J. H. Milhoan and several companions rode into town from a long business trip north:

> We stopped in the street in front of a saloon, on the square, and I held the horses outside while the others went in to get a drink. When they came back I went in to get a drink, then stepped around a bunch of ten or twelve men who were standing there to see who were at the card tables in the back end of the saloon. . . . When I got back [to the street] I could see east along

the trail and I noticed some troops by the bright moonlight and asked who they were. . . . Someone spoke up and said they were looking for [a cavalry] company from Leavenworth and it might be them. I watched them, they were about a quarter of a mile away. . . .

Others, including a number of soldiers, came from the saloon to watch the arrival. Guerrilla William Gregg continues:

When we arrived near the place, Quantrill ordered [me] to advance with sixty men and throw a cordon about the town that no one might escape, which was accomplished. Quantrill with the remaining men marched to the center of town. On their arrival at Court Square they found . . . Federal soldiers drawn up on the sidewalk on the south side of the square. It was determined to capture these men without bloodshed. Quantrill ordered his men to hitch their horses to the courtyard fence in close order, and when this was done, to form in the rear of the horses. This completed, they drew their revolvers and ordered the Federals to surrender, which they did without firing a shot.

Returning to Milhoan:

I made for my team at once and started to drop the tugs, thinking that if I let them loose the men might not be able to catch them . . . but before I got this done one of Quantrill's men said to me: "Fall into line, I will take that team."

Three or four men came running out on the street from the saloon, among them . . . my brother, and one of the men shot my brother in the foot. I was wearing a cavalry overcoat and one of Quantrill's men seeing it, said: "Pull off that coat." I told him I had no coat under it and he answered: "Take it off, God damn it, you won't need a coat very long," and I took it off and gave it to him. Hiram Blanchard . . . was in the saloon at the time. . . . He started to untie his mare when one of Quantrill's men told him he would take charge of the horse. The man prevented him from taking her when he, Blanchard, stepped around on the other side, pulled a butcher knife from his boot and attempted to get on, but as his head rose above the horse's back a shot from a double barrel shotgun . . . blew off the top of his head, and he fell like a beef, and on striking the ground, he jumped around like a chicken with his head cut off. . . .

Phil Wiggins and Josiah Skinner were two men of the Twelfth Kansas regiment, Company A, all of whom were quartered here. Wiggins had said he would never be taken by bushwhackers. Wiggins was upstairs in a frame building. . . . Three or four men went upstairs . . . where Wiggins was. Wiggins jerked the revolver from the leader and snapped it three or four times at him but it failed to go off. One of the other men then shot him in the back and after he fell the first man that Wiggins had tried to shoot, shot Wiggins three or four times after he had fallen. . . . Skinner lay asleep in the First Presbyterian church . . . used for soldiers' quarters. . . . He slept very

sound and was hard to awaken. When Quantrill's men came to his room and called for him to get up the call did not awaken him, so one of them shot him through the body as he lay in bed. . . . The Quantrill men went to all the residences in town and ordered all the men into the court house square.

One of those captured was Alex Rottman:

Upon reaching the square, I found that I was not the only prisoner—they having already some 30 or 40, and still they came. I could think of nothing like it, except the driving in and corralling of sheep.—Some few took to their heels; others dropped down in the grass and weeds. In fact none were select in their hiding places. One man hid in a garden and covered himself with tomato vines. Another secreted himself in a home and covered himself up with a lot of rags. Now commenced the cleaning out of stores and saloons. . . . Every store, shop and saloon in town was visited, and they took whatever they wanted. . . . After the men were taken prisoners they visited nearly all the houses and helped themselves. Where the women stayed at home but little harm was done.

J. H. Milhoan continues:

A. M. Hoff owned a store on the west side of the square, and Hoff was with the men corralled in the square. His wife, excited at the looting of the store, kept calling to her husband as she saw their property being loaded, and Mr. Hoff in his frenzy attempted to cross over where she was, when one of the guards struck him on the head with the butt end of a musket and knocked him senseless.

During the next four hours the guerrillas all but gutted Olathe. By dawn, with several wagons piled high with plunder and with fifty soon-to-be-paroled Federal soldiers in a file, Quantrill marched his command from the town. Behind, Olathe was a shambles. "The town . . . ," noted one citizen, "reminded me of a demolished bee-hive with the bees flying around."

Wrote Olathe *Mirror* editor John Francis a short time later: "My ruin financially is complete. The labor of years, and my future hopes—gone. My office was the product of five years sweating and struggling . . . and sick at heart I almost shudder as the future looms up before me."

It was the loss of Francis's chief rival, however, that epitomized the personal costs of the raid more than any. Not only was his newspaper, the Olathe *Herald*, a total loss, but John Giffen also saw $13,000 in cash stolen. Additionally, the editor lost a manuscript on algebra, for which he'd been offered $5,000 by a publisher, plus 15¢ royalty on each copy sold.

Because of the audacity of the raid, as well as Quantrill's vow that he would "not rest until he had laid the Kansas border in ruin," hundreds of terrified families fled to the interior of the state. "The condition of the

women and children is the most painful phase of this border panic," wrote a correspondent of the Leavenworth *Daily Conservative*. "They are helpless, and you cannot talk with them without suffering."

Across the line, however, most were inwardly elated. With memories vivid from the year before, Missouri secessionists, groaning under Federal occupation, felt they now had a champion—a man who not only would defy Yankee rule within the state, but who would wreak vengeance on the detested Kansas Jayhawkers without. Despite overwhelming odds, it became obvious during the long, hot summer of 1862 that the wily guerrilla leader and his handful of "whackers" were winning. Recalled one frustrated yet admiring Federal officer:

> His men were braver and more dangerous than the Apache or Comanche Indians [and] better riders. . . . They were industrious, bloodthirsty devils, who apparently never slept; to-day they would attack with a mad rush of twenty or forty men against a hundred, if they could see a chance of surprise, and in one night's ride they would be fifty miles away. . . . They were familiar with every cow-path, knew every farmer, ninety-five per cent of whom would give his all to help a bushwhacker fighting the "northern invader. . . ."

"Quantrill has held his own," added Missouri diarist Elvira Scott. "He is exemplifying what one desperate, fearless man can do."

4.

FIGHTING THE DEVIL

For many of the men who fought the guerrillas, the war on the western border was a dirty, hopeless, thankless job. Far from the popular, romantic ideal of Sir Walter Scott, with heroic knights galloping atilt through sun-washed meadows under gay and flapping banners, more often than not the Federal soldier of Missouri found himself trudging afoot through sucking black mud in fetid, dense jungles, fighting off swarms of mosquitoes and flies, hunting an elusive, deadly adversary that refused to come out and be killed. It is small wonder that many, like John Martin of the Eighth Kansas, felt cheated in this nightmare world and longed to escape to the great battlefields of the East before the glory and pageantry of the grander conflict passed them by. When Martin caught wind of a rumor that his regiment was to march south and face the regular Confederate army "in open and manly combat," he could hardly conceal his excitement in a letter to his sister:

> If so we shall have a chance to do something yet, and not see the war end without taking a part in its stirring scenes. The business we are in now is just as dangerous as a battle would be, and yet, do our duty as well as we may, we get no thanks and very little honor for it.

In contrast to the battlefields farther east, there was no respite behind the lines for Martin and other Union soldiers in Missouri and Kansas. Wherever a copse or ravine afforded men concealment, there lay the front line of the western border. In such a deadly setting, few assignments faced by Federal troopers were more dangerous or dreaded than picket duty. Although generally a quiet, harmless affair, the picket post was occasionally the scene of lively action. After a succession of hard marches, one weary cavalryman found himself on night guard in close proximity to a large number of guerrillas. Albert Greene:

> In spite of the excitement and the probability of a fight before morning I found it very hard to keep awake. For ninety-six hours I had had less than

six hours of sleep, and that broken and fitful; had been without food for twenty-four hours except a little half-cooked corn on the cob, and had not been refreshed by so much as a drink of water for more than half a day. Two hours is a long time when it is counted a minute at a time; and when a man is "dead tired" and his legs are ready to buckle up under him at every step it seems longer than ever. . . . An owl hooted away back in the rear and the uncanny sound startled me. Then I wondered whether it was an owl or whether it might not be a signal of the enemy for an attack. Remembering that there were a few trees in the rear I concluded it was an owl in one of them, and dismissed my fears. Then a horse gave a snort and moved about restlessly, and I could hear its master swearing at the animal as if he had been waked by it. I instantly forgot my fatigue and the alertness of the horse made a good sentinel of me in a second. Cavalry horses seldom make a mistake about the approach of an enemy at night. Just then I heard the swish of the wet grass as [my relief arrived]. I whispered instructions to McCune, and as he relieved me I started back to where [a comrade] was lying. I had gone but a few paces when I heard Mac shout "Halt!" At the same instant he fired his carbine. Turning to look toward the crest of the ridge I could see the whole prairie alive with moving horsemen. They were in column and were marching to the southwest along the road we had come earlier in the evening. Instantly came a command from someone at the head of the column, "Fours right into line, wheel . . . !" As the guerrillas came into line they began to fire at will and without orders that we could hear. Then the clear voice of Maj. [Linn] Thacher rang out, "Picket guard lie down!" This was quite unnecessary, as we were already as flat on the ground as we could be. The rebels had fired perhaps a hundred shots before our boys got fairly started. A few straggling shots here and there had been made, but it was not until after Thacher had told us to lie down that the firing became general. About the same time the swearing became general also. Each side attacked the ancestry of the other with every volley. . . . In the midst of the fracas and in spite of the uproar we could hear the shrill voice of Thacher calling "Fire lower, men, fire lower!" And again, "Darn it, men, fire lower—you're wastin' your ammunition!" After that it was noticeable that there were more shrieks of pain on the rebel side and not so much bragging. . . . About this time. . . . McCune cried out that he was hit, and when I crawled over to him and inquired where it had caught him he snarled out, "Get away or I'll kick you!" He had received a painful wound in the foot, but I don't believe he missed a shot because of it; in fact he may have fired a little faster for all I know. Then there were more shrieks of pain on the rebel side and . . . then the command, "Fall back, men, fall back; let's get out of here. . . ."

The first thing, as soon as it was light, was to examine the field. The grass was splashed with blood, and there were a few pools as though men might have died there, but the most significant appearance was the grass beaten flat to the ground in large spaces as though men had struggled there in death

agony. . . . Whether dead or wounded, the victims had been taken away by the guerrillas. We had a few wounded, one quite severely, but none killed.

Union troops assigned to the western border quickly realized that their war was not solely with a shadowy foe in the bush but with the people themselves, the vast majority of whom secretly aided in one form or another the Confederate irregulars. Despite outward appearances and protests to the contrary, few Federal soldiers were fooled. The frustration is evident in the caustic comments of one Yankee when he and his comrades entered Marshall:

I never saw such a complete change in so short a time. . . . When the troops came, the citizens were all Union. There was not more than two or three Secessionists here that would be candid enough to tell it. The troops expressed great surprise at finding so many Union men here.

Federal soldiers along the western border also quickly realized that their fight was not with men alone. During the first heady days of secession, female rebels had exhibited their pride and patriotism by stitching uniforms and flags for local military companies. After the Federal occupation of Missouri, however, the women resorted to a variety of subtle stratagems, such as spurning dance requests from Yankee officers at quadrilles and refusing to even look at the hated "blue-bellies" on the streets and sidewalks. There were more ostentatious displays as well. Reported the Unionist editor of the St. Joseph *Herald*:

Gen. [Ben] Loan keeps flying from a window in his headquarters a small flag. . . . Two ladies were passing down [the] street, and were nearly under the Union banner, when looking up they discovered the hateful emblem of loyalty, and promptly and indignantly stepped into the middle of the street—passing around what they were afraid to pass under. Bless their precious little secesh gizzards!

As the war widened and the struggle became increasingly desperate, many women sought a more active role in their cause. Some acted as spies, pickets, and couriers for the guerrillas, and a few, such as the legendary Mayfield girls, Sallie and Jennie, even rode with them occasionally. While accompanying a band of partisans one day, the young women and a friend were surprised by a detachment of Federals near Montevallo, Missouri. According to a chronicler:

The two Mayfield girls and Nancy Burrus were captured. Being found in company with the bushwhackers, they were taken first to Balltown and kept three days; then to Ft. Scott, where they were detained a week; then to Kansas City, where they were kept another week, and finally sent to St. Louis, where they were placed first in the Gratiot street prison . . . and

afterwards transferred to the Confederate female prison. . . . Miss Burrus was released, on taking the oath [of loyalty]. . . .

The Mayfields, however, adamantly refused to swear the detested oath and made plans to escape. The narrator continues:

> They were imprisoned in a room in the third story of the building, with other Confederate girls and women. Sallie . . . fashioned a screw driver from a table knife, which she had secreted, and opened the door of the room by taking off its hinges. Then, carrying their shoes, she and her young sister slipped noiselessly down the stairways, passing safely the drowsy sentinel snoozing on the landing. The door opening from the foot of the stairway on the street was a formidable one, with heavy bolts and bars, and there was a soldier on guard upon the outside pacing his beat with his musket on his shoulder. Drawing the bolts and forcing the lock with some difficulty, the girls waited until they heard the sentinel turn the corner of the street and start to walk the pavement on the side of the building . . . when they quickly stepped out . . . closing the door behind them, and tripped away.
>
> They walked the streets till daylight. Unacquainted with the city, and not daring to ask for assistance, they encountered all sorts of difficulties, and had many narrow escapes. At last they contrived to reach the track of the . . . North Missouri Railroad . . . on which they walked nearly to St. Charles, and eventually reached some friends in the western part of [the] county.

Angered by the duplicity and treachery of the people as well as frustrated at its own inability to stamp out Quantrill and other guerrillas, the Union command along the border intensified its campaign against those suspected of providing aid and comfort to the partisans. As with the Mayfields, the "Oath of Loyalty" was one way to test the fidelity of civilians. The value of such oaths was, of course, largely dependent upon the character of the oath-taker. "They [will] take loyalty like gin and sugar," said one dubious Yankee colonel, "and pass it off just as easy."

Those high-minded individuals who refused to swear and "swallow the dog" could expect fines, confiscation, imprisonment—or worse. One of those who did refuse was former Jackson County magistrate Robert Smart. "He had been hiding from the Federals for weeks to keep from taking the . . . oath," wrote Elvira Scott from Miami in the summer of 1862:

> He seemed to have a mortal terror of it, but they could not have had anything else against him, for he never had nor expected to bear arms. . . .
>
> He had been away all night for fear of being taken, & had just returned to his home when he heard they were coming. . . . There were between 50 & 100 Federals mounted & equipped. . . . On a little open space, between two lots, they ordered him to halt. The first party came upon him while the

other party rode down the street & came across. . . . In full view, he halted where he was ordered to, & held up his hands, saying "I surrender."

Here they came upon him from all sides but one, & they parleyed. But they told him they intended to kill him. The other party that came across the hill had come up bellowing like savages, "Shoot him! Shoot him!" One of the men fired a pistol, wounding him in the arm. He knew it was death, & with the natural instinct of self-preservation he tried to escape, & ran. The whole party yelled & fired. There must have been more than a hundred shots. In the hollow near the branch he crossed the road to [a] corn field, & while crossing the fence he received the last, fatal wound. . . . There his distracted wife & family found him welling in blood but able to speak. I heard him tell his wife that he had surrendered two times. The women got to him first. The men [i.e., citizens] seemed so horror-stricken that they dared not go to him. And then these "brave soldiers" of their great nation formed in line by the dying man. He was old, helpless, & unarmed. What a victory on this bright Sabbath day!

Tests of loyalty were not confined to Missouri. Suspected Southern sympathizers and pro-slavery holdouts from the territorial days were also ready targets in Kansas. In a letter written October 8, 1862, Julia Lovejoy made note of one such incident involving her son, a Federal officer stationed at Paola:

Charles . . . was awakened one night last week and called from his room by two men, who apologized when they found their mistake,— "he was not the man they wanted." They went to another room, called out two men who started off with them in the night. The next morning . . . a soldier there, went into a piece of woods nearby and saw a human hand protruding from a hastily dug grave, and there was one of the men dead, shot through the head. . . .

The Missouri enrollment act of 1862, requiring all men between the ages of eighteen and forty-five to join the militia, was thought to be one way of culling the loyal from the disloyal. The abuses of the system soon became apparent, however. Some who joined were little better than outlaws who used the militia to cloak their crimes. Writing to a Federal commandant, a citizen of northwest Missouri describes one militia company in his neighborhood:

I will say with all candor they are the worst set of men I have ever seen in all my life altogether. . . . Most of them are drunkards, gamblers, whorehouse pimps, thieves, murderers, house-burners, and Captain Fish is as mean a man as I ever knew. I think he would fight . . . but he will make 10 bushwhackers, or rather run and drive 10 men in the brush, where he will kill 1. . . . The Kansas thieves or jayhawkers all know each other whenever they meet, and Fish and his men will not catch a man for stealing, murder, or

> house-burning that can give them the right signs. You may take my word for that. This way of going through the country cursing and insulting peaceable men and women, and just as loyal to the country as anyone—any man who don't sanction their conduct and can't give them their thievish signs, and has got a good horse, or revolver, or anything they want . . . is a rebel or bushwhacker. . . .
>
> This letter I don't want it known that you ever got such, for I tell you positively a man would be shot and killed by those men as certain as they knew it or suspected. . . .

There were, of course, staunch Unionists who joined the militia and performed their duty with alacrity. A. J. McRoberts was one. In a letter to his wife, Mollie, who had fled Missouri earlier, McRoberts describes the work of his unit near Marshall:

> We came on a parcel of bushwhackers the other eavening down in the bottom and we charged on them an put them to skedadling in good earnest. I run them so close that one of them jumped off of his horse took to the brush and I got his horse. I fired at them but my horse was running at full speed and I missed them. . . .

In a "drive" the following day, McRoberts had better luck:

> We heard 3 guns in quick succession in the timber an be low us. So Henry & I charged round . . . and got within 20 yards of the mill. I saw one of the devils cross the road before me. I galloped up to him with my pistole pointing at him and ordered him to surrender which he did. He was very mutch frightened. I aske him his name & he said it was Seward. I cocke my pistole and was going to kill him but he said he would tell me the truth. His name was Bill Warner. I then took him up to . . . the capt. & his squad. . . . We keep the rebels in this part of the country dodging and skulking all the time to save their lives.

The above examples are extreme cases, and to the dismay of its originators, the enrollment act not only failed to achieve its goals but in fact greatly exacerbated an already spiraling situation. Most "fence-sitters" who were forced into the militia were half-hearted soldiers at best— "about as effective as Falstaff's recruits," sneered one Unionist—and the vast majority of Secessionists who joined saw enlistment as the only alternative to imprisonment or death. A great many, of course, chose the second option and either fled south to the Confederate army or slipped quietly into the brush with the guerrillas.

Another method used to combat bushwhackers and their abettors was also the easiest. Some Federal commanders made it their credo that simple proximity to partisan camps was itself proof of guilt and male inhabitants could expect no mercy. Wrote Col. William R. Penick:

> It is next to impossible to fight these guerrillas on their own ground in the brush, where they have every advantage over us. We must make it unhealthy for the neighborhoods where they harbor . . . them. . . . It is my intention, wherever I find a camp of bushwhackers, to take summary vengeance on those who I have satisfactory reason to believe have knowledge of the existence of such a camp and do not report it.

Other officers enlisted the aid of volunteers from their ranks or employed Unionist death squads to carry out assignments similar to Penick's. One such action occurred near Lexington on October 4, 1862. Recorded Willard Mendenhall in his journal:

> I learned that six men dressed in citizens dress went to Mr. John McPhadons house Saturday night and called him out of bed, told him to follow them. His two daughters mistrusted the men and did not want thare father to go, persuaded him not to go, he was forced away, the girls clung to him as long as they could. When the ruffians got him a few yards from the house they shot him, put six balls in him. J. McPhadon was a southern man, but he has never bin under arms and has stayed at home all the time. Two or three of his sons are in the army.

The effect on communities where assassinations occurred was devastating. Continues Mendenhall, several days later:

> I spent a miserable night. At 12 midnight some soldiers came to the house pounding on the door. We kept very quiet. They left but we did not know what they wanted or if they would come back and Mr. McFadin being shot a few nights ago . . . made me think of him all the morning.

Entrapment was another method of ferreting out guerrilla sympathizers. The Kansas City *Journal of Commerce* recorded one such ruse:

> A squad of Federal soldiers went out on a scout to the Blue. The officer in charge concluded to try strategy on one Alph Laws, a farmer who lived near the Blue. . . . Two soldiers were properly rigged out for the occasion and went to his house, apparently greatly frightened, and represented themselves as Quantrill's men, in search of Geo. Todd. The old fellow was completely taken in, or rather took them in and gave them some dinner, and fixed them out a lunch and then volunteered to go with them and show them where Todd's men were in the habit of hitching their horses, and then proposed to go to a cave where he said ten of Todd's men were at the time. The two men declined his escort further, and started on for the cave, in the direction he pointed to them, until out of his sight, when they changed their course, and came back and joined their party, and returned to his house. . . .

Whether Laws was actually a guerrilla sympathizer or not was immaterial. He, like countless others caught in the middle, had become the enemy at hand, and he, like countless others, would pay the ultimate price.

In addition to hired assassins and the employment of Indian trackers from Kansas reservations, Federal officers also enlisted the aid of civilians and military volunteers to act as spies or "scouts." Those selected for such "dark" assignments well knew the risks involved. Because the men who formed bushwhacking bands were a relatively small, cohesive brotherhood, many members friends since childhood, the chances of an outsider infiltrating their ranks were slim. Some would-be spies failed to even reach the guerrillas' camp. Again, in the words of Willard Mendenhall: "Col Henry Neal went in the country with a company of cavelry in serch of four men he sent out as spies some time ago. He found the bones of all four of them . . . in a thicket." And for those who did reach a camp, their stay was usually brief. Wrote Capt. Henry Palmer:

> I selected two men who were patriotic enough to accept the detail without one word of protest, volunteering for the . . . work promptly. . . .
>
> One lost his life within ninety days, shot in the back of his head by [George Todd], without one word of warning. Sitting at the camp-fire laughing and joking with his comrades, the assassin Todd stepped out from the dark and, placing his pistol close to the back of his victim's head, fired. Henry Starr, the spy, fell forward near the feet of his unsuspected comrade, the other spy. . . .
>
> Dick Yager, who commanded the guerrilla band of which Starr was a member, sprang forward with drawn revolver and demanded of Todd an explanation. Todd replied by asserting that Starr had sent a letter to [the Federals]—that he was a spy. The soldier who had joined the guerrillas with Starr remained with the band. . . .

Despite the risks and failures, some spies did manage to relay information that helped Union officers plot guerrilla movements, scatter gathering bands, even prevent the capture of at least one railroad train. Small victories were gained, but nothing, it seemed—not oaths, militia acts, midnight murders, or spies—was effective in curtailing irregular warfare along the border.

Although far and away the most successful, Quantrill was not the only partisan leader at work in western Missouri. North of the river, young Joe Hart operated in the region about St. Joseph. Hart would soon become legendary for his brash exploits, including the capture and parole of two Yankee colonels. In southwest Missouri, William Marchbanks, Cy Gordon, James N. "Pony" Hill, and the "Wild Irishman," Daniel Henly, harried Federal forces around Nevada City and Carthage, while Thomas Livingston carried out daring raids up the Drywood into Kansas. So charmed was his life and so seemingly immune to Federal lead was he that rumors hinted and many believed that Livingston wore a special breastplate made of steel. In mid-September 1862, another bold bushwhacker

led fourteen men into the "buffalo country" and raided the far-flung hamlet of Salina. After stripping the place clean of horses and arms, the raiders dissolved once again into the endless Kansas prairie.

No guerrilla chieftain was as resourceful, however, or so greatly captured the public imagination as William Quantrill. On October 17, 1862, the wily rebel slipped across the state line once again and swooped down on the village of Shawnee. Two citizens were killed in the melee, and much of the town was destroyed. Early in November, while leading his men south for the winter, Quantrill surprised a large Federal wagon train near Harrisonville. In addition to a vast amount of supplies captured and burned, nine Yankees were killed and more than a score taken prisoner. A few days later the guerrillas turned aside to attack the Union garrison at Lamar. Although the assault was beaten back, much of the town went up in flames.

With Quantrill's departure from the western border, much of the fighting also receded. The rebel captain's increasing ability to defy the Union occupation of Missouri was a lesson that lingered on, however. Federal commanders had given their best effort. But best efforts, obviously, were not enough. The frustration and anger of one Kansas editor is readily revealed by an article in the Fort Scott *Bulletin*:

> Every day we see men calling themselves "United States scouts" riding through our streets bedecked with feathers and ribbons and carrying revolvers and bowie knives enough to arm a full company. Before scouts of this description hunt out men of Quantrill's stamp, we shall expect to see water running up-hill.

With public pressure in Kansas mounting, new tactics were needed if Quantrill was to be stopped in the coming year.

5.

BLACK HARVEST

EVEN WHILE the blood and fury of battle was raging without, a quiet social revolution was taking place within. During the 1850s, Missourians had understandably been fearful of a free-soil haven looming just across the line. To their great relief, however, relatively few slaves actually ran off to Kansas. Despite the agitation of New Englanders in the territory and a number of small raids across the border by militant abolitionists, including an 1858 sally by John Brown, the great majority of Missouri slaves outwardly showed little or no inclination to cross over to the "land of Canaan." As apologists had argued, and as now seemed apparent, Missouri chattel were content with their lot, and even if the chance availed, most would not willingly exchange their present warm security for a cold, uncertain future. This wistful dream was suddenly shattered, however, by the guns of Fort Sumter and the swoop of the Kansas Jayhawkers.

As James Lane, Charles Jennison, Daniel Anthony, and others marched with fire and sword through western Missouri, hundreds of runaways—"contrabands"—instantly swarmed about their standard. Although legally bound by the Fugitive Slave Act to return all escaping bondsmen, the Kansans simply turned an indifferent shoulder to the law. Altruistic motives no doubt spurred some. The majority, however, were concerned more with chastising and despoiling Missourians than with any humanitarian crusade, and while they murdered and burned, the Jayhawkers were also mindful to carry off their enemy's slaves. Because a healthy field hand was valued in the hundreds, even thousands, of dollars, to strip a Missouri planter of his slaves was often to inflict more financial damage than burning his home and crops. In spite of President Lincoln's bid to hold loyal slave owners to the Union by not tampering with the "peculiar institution" as it already existed, wherever the Kansans marched, slavery, for all intents and purposes, "went up."

When they reached his master's farm near Mount Vernon, a young Missouri slave, Andrew Williams, watched as the Kansans killed the live-

stock and piled the plunder from the house into wagons. And then, wrote Williams:

> when they all load an Ready to go one of the oficers Said to my mothr dont you want to go to Kans and Be free. my mother Said yess Sir. get your children in this wagon. have you got any Beed clothes asked the ofsior. mother Says no Sir. go in the house and take your Mistises. take all you want. my mother Refused to do that and one of the Solders wint in and taken an arm full of Beed clothes and put them in the wagon. wee Bid the colored family that did not want to leave good By and all so the white foalks. then we went on our way.

For reasons political, as well as personal, the march of U.S. Senator James Lane through Missouri developed into a slave raid of epic proportions. As the Kansan slashed and burned his way across the state, hundreds of contrabands flocked to his camp. Efforts by loyal slave owners to enlist Federal officers in the recovery of stolen chattel were to no avail. Wrote one man from Kansas City, October 10, 1861:

> A few days since a lady, whose property had coolly and deliberately walked off and set up on its own account, came to Gen. [Samuel D.] Sturgis for redress. After hearing her story, the gen. replied: "Madam, if I had your nigger, I should feel it my duty to return him, and would cheerfully do so; but if he has got into Lane's Brigade, all hell couldn't get him!!!" The lady gave the matter up, and her chattel is now becoming the *owner* of property.

The task of escorting one large group of runaways to Kansas and freedom fell to Hugh Fisher, a regimental chaplain with Lane who, with religious fervor, had looted Osceola churches to furnish his own back in Lawrence. In his words:

> Next morning early there was a stir in the camp. Fourteen men were detailed as an escort to save us from falling into the hands of the guerrillas. We had a wagon load of almost useless guns. I picked out about thirty negroes and armed them. . . . Such a caravan had not moved since the days of Moses. It was a nondescript emigration. We traveled day and night, not stopping to cook, only eating what cold food might chance to be on hand. . . . When we reached Kansas I halted the command, drew them up in a line and, raising myself to my full height on my war horse commanded silence, and there under the open heavens, on the sacred soil of freedom, in the name of the Constitution of the United States, the Declaration of Independence, and by authority of General James H. Lane, I proclaimed that they were "forever free."
>
> Their mouths flew open and such a shout went up as was never heard. Men and women who had been sighing for liberty during many long unrequited years of toil now felt and knew they were free. They jumped, cried, sang and laughed for joy. . . . A frosty-headed old negress of eighty years

stepped out of line and shouted: "Chillen, heah me! I'se been tellin' you dese many a yeah de yeah of jubilee'd come, and Glory to Gawd! de yeah of jubilee am come!"

"God sent Jim Lane for me," said another former slave, "and I don't care what anybody says."

Another Jayhawker who took more than average delight in freeing slaves and despoiling their masters was abolitionist Daniel Anthony. In a letter to his father, Anthony describes one such sweep:

> On our route . . . we took 150 mules & 40 horses— 129 Negroes and gave the negroes 60 Horses & mules a lot of oxen, 10 wagons & two carriages and all loaded down with Household Furniture— The negroes train into Kansas was over a mile long—

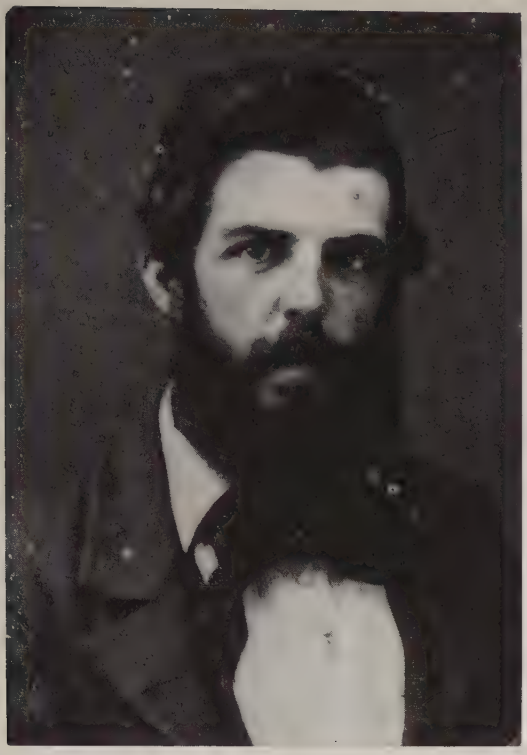
Like this group, not only did hundreds of blacks enter Kansas under the aegis of the Jayhawkers, but thousands more seized the initiative and "stole themselves." On the open border south of Kansas City, the magical step across an invisible line was for many slaves the difference between toil and bondage and what they construed as a life of freedom and ease. Charles Monroe Chase, a traveling editor for a small Illinois newspaper, relayed to readers his impressions of a trip down the state line:

> Contrabands are increasing beyond the most extravagant abolition expectation throughout the entire Kansas border. Some estimates place the daily emigration from Missouri at from fifty to one hundred. They emigrate during the night, in squads or families, accompanied generally by a span of good mules and a lumber wagon with whatever portables they can seize upon. Some are glad to get work and prove their manhood and usefulness; others lounge in idleness, refusing good offers, preferring to live on the hospitality of those who have erected little shanties and are earning a living.

The flood of runaways across the open border was so great and unexpected that many villages soon found their streets "in possession of the contraband niggers."

North of Kansas City, the broad Missouri River proved a barrier to escaping slaves in the summer. With winter, however, the most asked question along the plantation grapevine was simply, "Is the ice strong enough to bear?" When the river had indeed frozen over, a natural bridge was thus formed, and droves of blacks dashed across the ice to Wyandotte, Leavenworth, Atchison, Elwood, and smaller towns on the Kansas shore. Even the remote northern settlement of White Cloud felt the impact. In the words of local editor Sol Miller:

> The contrabands have been coming over the river in swarms. They are as thick as ducks on the water. Western Missouri must be about depopulated of



Willard Mendenhall
State Historical Society of Missouri, Columbia

its slave population. Good enough for the Secesh; but we fear our people will get "too much of a good thing" before they are done with the darkies.

Although many Kansans felt much as Miller did and "almost regretted" the state's popularity among runaways, none could deny that Missouri slaveholders were being punished grievously. Wrote one soldier mockingly from Wyandotte:

> Oh! ye of Southern faith, who still maintain that the negroe loves his bondage; and like the faithful cur would lick the hand that doth chastise him.
>
> "Could ye but stand where I have stood," and witness but for one half hour, the cloudy throng who cross Missouri's icy bridge; could you but see the sparkling eyes, the happy grin, the elastic step of those who come to our shores, suddenly emancipated from the most cursed bondage, elevated from an equality with horses and wagons to that of free and independent human beings, methinks you would never again be heard to advocate that most heinous sin—slavery. The argument is too strong. Hundreds of negroes daily cross the "Big Muddy" to Kansas—the land of the free, and the home of the brave.

Because of the precarious condition of slavery in western Missouri, the price of chattel dropped drastically. In 1861 there were 2,975 bondsmen living in one river county, valued at $1,300,000; by 1862, 2,318 slaves remained in the same county, with a market value of $320,000. In effect, a planter with $16,000 invested in slavery during 1861 was one year later worth only $5,000.

As damaging as the loss of slaves was, when they ran away the Missourian often lost a good deal more. Writing in his diary, Willard Mendenhall gives a glimpse of the staggering drain of wealth near Lexington:

> Monday 6
> Doc Higgins told me that his negros run away last night, took his mules and waggon. Mr Orlando Bradly lost nine negros, Mr Isaac McGirk all of his hoarses. Sixty negros went off from this neighbourhood last night.
>
> Saturday 18
> At sunrise this morning Mr Wallace came over to see if we had lost our team or any thing last night. Told us all of his negros had gone, nine, taken his oxen and wagon. In a short time Mr Bellis came by, said his waggon harness and hoarses wer stolen last night. I went in town. Doc Hassell told me all of his, two, negros wer gone, Judge Stratton lost all of his (two). Brigadire General Vaughn lost two, Mr Parmer, Mr Packard, Mrs White and many others lost thare negros besides many teams wer stolen by them. Mr Musselman came in town and stated abought 80 negros passed his neighbourhood this morning on thare way to Kansas, some white men went with them to protect them on thare road through Missouri.

Far from Harriet Beecher Stowe's popular image of ragged and impoverished runaways, slaves who entered Kansas often came better dressed and better equipped than their white counterparts. One slave, noted the Atchison *Freedom's Champion*, "appeared to have more property than any emigrant, white or black, that we have seen this spring." Another festive group passed through the streets of Kansas City with large letters printed on the side of their buggy:

IMMEDIATE EMANCIPATION!
with
TRANSPORTATION!!
and without
COMPENSATION!

Beset as they were by Federal troops and Jayhawkers, Missouri slaveholders nevertheless tried to stem the westward flow of their wealth. Hired guards watched the border crossings by day, citizen patrols scouted the roads at night, and the owners themselves tried a wide array of pleas,

bribes, threats, and even tall tales about "abolition demons" in an effort to hold onto their property. Recalled one former slave, Armilda Williams: "They told the slaves that the Yankees had horns. They told us the woods were full of men so we would be afraid to run away."

Such attempts to slow the drain of slaves from Missouri proved largely ineffectual, and with the proliferation of weapons caused by the war, efforts to preserve the crumbling foundation of bondage became an increasingly perilous proposition. Both the fear of blacks armed and loose on the land and disgust with their irresponsibility are conveyed in an entry from Elvira Scott's diary:

> People seem apprehensive of trouble with the Negroes. The patrol is out every night. They have searched for arms in every cabin; several pistols were found. Many Negroes have run off, & many returned home. They are regarded with suspicion. . . . A woman of Mrs. Ross's, who had been sick all summer & had been a great care to her mistress, started off on foot with one of the black men that she had lately taken for a husband. They were turned back by some of the neighbors. They stayed at home a few days & started again, taking two horses. The woman took her mistress's riding horse & new saddle, the man took his master's. The woman left three small children behind, one of them almost an infant. It would have been a great crime in the eyes of the Northern abolitionist if her master had parted her from her children.

With the Fugitive Slave Act still binding, wealthy Missourians occasionally hired professional slave-catchers to arrest and return runaways from Kansas. A dangerous occupation anywhere in the North before the war, the "trade" became a perfectly deadly endeavor in Kansas after 1861. "About eleven o'clock [P.M.], four men went to [a] house . . . in this City," reported the Wyandotte *Gazette*, "and after shooting him through the arm, seized a negro . . . and hurried him down . . . towards the river. . . ." Continues the *Gazette*:

> The negro called out to a couple of Lieutenants who happened to be standing there, and asked them to assist him, as the men were trying to take him off into bondage. The officers without waiting for a second invitation, went to the rescue of the negro, and the kidnappers made tracks for parts unknown, leaving the negro with his life and liberty, and a mutilated arm to remember them by.
>
> Such outrages as this have been quite too common here during the winter and spring, and it is high time some of the villains engaged in them were shot in their tracks, as those connected with the affair . . . would have been had the officers who rescued the negro been armed at the time.

Later, a slave-catcher was cornered by a mob of blacks in the same city and saved from lynching only when whites quickly stepped in. The reprieve proved brief, however, for while he was being escorted toward

Fort Leavenworth by George Hoyt and several Red Legs, the prisoner was shot and killed as he "attempted to escape."

After well-publicized incidents such as these, attempts to recapture slaves in Kansas abated abruptly. A joyous John Speer of the Lawrence *Republican* celebrated the victory:

> We thank God, that the human *hounds* have at last been measurably driven to their dirty kennels; and that they can no longer roam at will over our prairies after innocent men, women and children. Of all the mean, miserable creatures that infest the earth, these canine wretches in human form are the most despicable.

Secure in Kansas, and with Missouri dotted by friendly Federal garrisons, many former slaves became bold enough to return to their old homes and carry out Jayhawking raids of their own. A chronicler relates one such incident near Weston:

> A negro was caught by Mr. Andrew Gutherie . . . in the act of stealing a horse from his farm. The negro was walking off with the horse, and on refusing to halt when commanded to do so by Mr. Gutherie, the latter fired upon him and shot him, but unfortunately not fatally. The negro escaped, but without the horse.
>
> The following night 150 negroes and white thieves came over from Leavenworth and stole five head of horses from Mr. Gutherie, including a wagon and team. They also plundered the people as they came and went, taking horses, wagons and teams, and loading the wagons with plunder of every description. Stopping at James Schultz's, they took three fine brood mares and four mules from him; and other farmers along their route suffered in like proportion.

Like their white counterparts, black Jayhawkers brazenly auctioned off their plunder on the streets of Lawrence, Leavenworth, and the larger towns of Kansas. Other runaways, longing for families, returned to their old homes with seeming impunity. Writing of his relatives in Saline County, Willard Mendenhall records: "One of thare negroes . . . that ran off some time ago, went home one night last week, took a squad of white men with him and took his wife and two children away, stole two hoarses from his master at the same time."

Although slave auctions were held in Kansas City as late as the spring of 1863, the system, as everyone white or black knew, was "played out." "Slavery in Missouri has run its race," noted a visitor to the state. "Nothing but shadows of the institution are observable."

Those bondsmen who had not fled with the Jayhawkers or run off "on their own hook" and yet remained with their masters were generally the very old or very young. The irony of the situation was not lost on at least

one Missouri diarist: "Taking care of Negroes is a matter of humanity, not profit anymore." As for those able-bodied black males who chose to remain and flex their newfound freedom in Missouri, their presence was more a cause of suspicion and alarm than of comfort. From Lexington, Willard Mendenhall recorded in his journal:

> Fryday 8
> I found the citizens in great excitement caused by one hundred negroes leaving the soldiers camp last night and camping near the Fair Ground. The negros were armed . . . and Sam Earl (a low rowdy from town) with a few of Col. Kings rigament went with them as an escort. The conservative Union men (citizens) was very mutch oppose to the negro camping in the country whare they could committ all kinds of desposatations and encouraged in it by the radical Union men & abolitionists. [Leading citizens] encouraged men to go out and arrest the negros and bring them and thare plunder in town. Many citizens went out . . . but found more of Col King's Rigament thare with the negros so they (thought) it prudent not to attack them so they came back to town. . . . King's soldiers with Sam Earl came in town, made threats they was going to kill every one of the men that went out to dispurse the negros denouncing them all as Rebels. They struck one young man on the head, knocked him senseless. . . .

In a world turned upside down, those who set out to enforce the law now found themselves the outlaws. Mendenhall goes on:

> Saturday 9th
> Many persons that wer threatened by the soldiers have left town. . . . Morrisson and Bellis wer shot at and made a narrow escape. Sam Earl and his party went around this morning with ropes threatening to hang any one that went out to disperse the negros. Thare never was a more gloomy time here than the present. . . . Mob violence prevails. I intended to go down to St. Louis on the first boat but I cannot consistantly leave my family at the mercy of these robbers and murderers. I am disarmed and could afford but little protection to them if assaulted but I would feel better . . . if I was with my family in time of danger.
>
> Sunday 10th
> Heard of the soldiers most shamefully beating Mat Lethwourth then followed him. When near home they shot three balls through his head killing him instantly. They also attacked old man Low, shot at him but he got away.
>
> Tuesday 12
> When the soldiers shot Matt Lechworth they done it in sight of his home and he layed there until next day his wife had become uneasy abought him, thought he was arrested, went to get him released. On her return home heard of his being shot, went to the place in a hollow near her house, thare he lay stiff and cold.

In the summer of 1862, the enlistment of blacks for the Union army began in communities throughout Kansas. Although most runaways were understandably in no mood to exchange one form of bondage for another so soon, especially for one vastly more dangerous, two regiments were eventually formed. The dread spectacle of blacks in blue marching beneath the U.S. flag thus became for Missourians a terrible reality. Later that year the recruits first engaged rebel forces at Butler, Missouri, where a band of bushwhackers were beaten back. A short time later, near Island Mound, the former slaves again fought Confederate irregulars and were once more victorious.

With their bright uniforms and deadly arms, and with the surge of pride and power that came with them, black soldiers were quick to resent insults, especially from Missourians. While on the march south from Fort Scott, a white officer of the First Kansas Colored Regiment made note of one such incident:

> On the second day we met a butternut who had every appearance of being a bushwhacker. Someone asked him how he liked nigger soldiers, he said they were too damned stinking. In a moment he was dismounted and placed in the rear guard, between a file of the stinking soldiers, and marched about twenty miles, with one of the soldiers mounted upon his horse. At night he was tried by a drum head Court Martial, and there being some evidence of his being Union, and none to the contrary, he was sentenced to receive ten lashes on the bare skin, administered by one of the stinking soldiers. One was detailed, and with a cartridge box belt in his hand, he proceeded to the guard house to perform the willing task. The prisoner was stripped, and well did the soldier perform his part. Afterwards he said he did not think they stunk any worse than white men.—He was then hooted out of camp.

Most blacks who entered the war did so as Federals. A few, however, had other ideas. It was while watching Kansas Red Legs dismantle his master's plantation that Henry Wilson took his stand. In his words:

> When they asked me if I wished to go I said, Hell, no! I don't want to have nothing to do with such robbers and thieves. I joined Quantrill when Master Wilson moved to Texas and . . . carr[ied] supplies to [him] and his men. . . .
>
> I took [an] oath . . . that I would stick to the end, and Quantrill trusted me because I didn't drink whiskey and because I was dependable and could shoot.

In a skirmish near Roanoke, Missouri, both the editor of the Caldwell *Banner of Liberty* and the Federal soldiers involved were startled to find that one of the bushwhackers killed in the firefight was a black man who had blazed away at them with a double-barreled shotgun.

Although noncombatants who did not overtly aid the enemy generally had little to fear from bushwhackers, blacks, like their white counterparts, soon learned that in the ebb and flow of a vicious guerrilla war, nothing was certain and death could be, and often was, waiting just around the next bend. On a cold, dark morning of the new year, 1863, the fate that greeted one group of runaways around a bend of the Missouri River was recorded by the Leavenworth *Bulletin*:

> At about half past 2 o'clock, while passing the little town of Sibley . . . the pilot [of the *New Sam Gaty*] was hailed by the leader of a band of from 40 to 60 guerrillas, and ordered to put the boat ashore or he would be shot. The channel being within ten yards of the shore, and the boat in the chute, he had no other alternative, and landed. As soon as she touched, the most villainous band of scoundrels unhung rushed aboard and took possession of the boat. They inquired for the Captain, and he was soon roused from his berth by the pilot, and informed that he was in the hands of the guerrillas. They immediately ordered the contrabands ashore, and were surprised to find only 80. . . . The leader said they had had information concerning the Gaty, and expected to find 300 aboard and [their white sponsor,] Parson Fisher. The Captain assured them that he was not with him, and for a time they believed it. Shortly after, they threatened to burn the boat unless Parson Fisher was produced in fifteen minutes. The Captain said they could do so, as he could not produce him; but they believed his statement and did not attempt to injure the boat. . . . When the negroes were marched ashore the Captain asked the guerrilla leader what he intended to do with them. He replied, "blow their brains out!" The Captain remonstrated with him and finally he concluded to kill only the "bucks," and forthwith eight or ten were murdered—the rest scattering and hiding in the darkness.

6.

THE LOT WAS CAST

HARDLY HAD THE YEAR 1863 begun when Kansans learned that their state, now barely two years old, had once again been invaded by bushwhackers. In February, George Todd, one of Quantrill's ablest lieutenants, led a squad of guerrillas who captured and plundered Spring Hill, thirty miles southwest of Kansas City. With the arrival of warm weather and green grass a short time later, the worst fears of all Kansans were realized when the remaining Missouri bushwhackers returned to their old haunts along the border. "Quantrill is here," reported a Union spy from the Sni Hills.

Throughout much of April, residents along the route noted suspicious-looking groups of riders drifting at intervals down the Santa Fe Road. When the forty or so guerrillas finally formed near Council Grove in early May, another of Quantrill's best men, Dick Yager, was on hand to take control. At Diamond Springs, fifteen miles southwest of "the Grove," the raiders looted a store and murdered the owner. Whatever their greater plan, a large posse of Kansans led by James McDowell soon located the bushwhackers on the Cottonwood River. According to posse member Hugh Cook:

> Our party dashed in and surprised the camp before the guerrillas had time to prepare for defense. Some of them scattered in the bushes—ten, however, were captured, together with six yoke of cattle and two wagons loaded with powder, bacon, whisky, &c. By this time it was dark. In the morning the prisoners, under charge of [myself] and thirteen men, were started back for the Grove. A party were left to scour the country around the camp. Mr. McDowell, with a party, followed on the Santa Fe Road some twelve miles, also up and down the Cottonwood for twenty miles, but did not succeed in finding any more. After the return to the Grove four others were arrested in the neighborhood, thus in all seventeen were captured. . . . Quite a number of secesh sympathizers in and around Council Grove gave bonds for their good behavior in the future and took the oath of allegiance.

His job complete, Cook soon handed his prisoners over to a company of Kansas soldiers. A short time later, "while attempting to escape," all the rebels were shot and killed.

Yager and the remnants of his shattered band eventually rejoined and fled east up the Santa Fe Road. At Ridgeway, the raiders paused long enough to murder one man. A few miles further a stage station was reached and a Federal soldier, returning from furlough, was riddled with balls. An hour or so later, Yager's gang approached the village of Marion. Wrote storekeeper D. Hubbard:

> Mr. Waters came in about dusk and said that it was reported that the bushwhackers were at some point west of us, committing depredations. The report was treated lightly, by us all, and we sat down to supper. The daughter of Mrs. Waters soon came running and called out that a lot of horsemen were coming down the road. They came to the door, where I met them and was seized, searched and questioned as to my politics, and the State I came from. The answers not being satisfactory to them, Yager gave the order to shoot. Three of them obeyed the order. One bullet went through my lungs, the other two missed, they being less than ten feet away. After going through the house and taking what they wanted, and taking a horse from the stable, they left, following the trail east.

Although in critical condition, Hubbard recovered from his wound. Hovey Lowman of the Lawrence *State Journal* continues:

> Passing on, they overtook the Santa Fe coach at Black Jack, took its horses and robbed its passengers. Mr. Johnson, of Colorado, lost $1,600. Another, $300 and a very valuable gold watch. Still another lost $170 and his clothes. . . . While a few held the horses, the party operated rather profitably. From Stonebraker's store they took $600 in goods, wearing apparel and postage stamps. The goods they packed in sacks. They set fire to Brockway's store. . . .
>
> In their course they sacked the town of Gardner . . . carrying off all the horses, mules, and a great amount of other property. . . .
>
> The only party that was really close upon the villains' heels was that from Minneola. There, the call of the physician to attend upon Mr. Hubbard gave the alarm early in the evening; and a large party at once started out, reaching Black Jack an hour after the thieving band left.

As in the past, when the retribution finally commenced, those living along the guerrillas' route whose loyalty was suspect were first to suffer. One man was arrested at Council Grove "for treasonable utterances, spitting on the U.S. flag, &c.," and was promptly shot, while near the Santa Fe south of Lawrence, soldiers broke up a "nest of rebels," killing two. Concluded Hovey Lowman:

> Briefly, a band of guerrillas have penetrated into our State one hundred and fifty miles, in broad daylight, giving us and our military protectors full warning. . . . They have left the State, almost unmolested, with $30,000 to $40,000 in money, valuables and horses. They can do it again, unless our military authorities are more *prompt*.

As Lowman intimated, and as his readers feared, the raid to Diamond Springs seemed a chilling harbinger of more to come. Increasingly, the demand was raised for soldiers to guard the state line. "A small force permanently located along the border . . . will be all sufficient to make inhabitants safe in their property and persons," Lowman continued. Should this simple step be taken, he added, "no band of Missouri cutthroats . . . will risk their skins on the Kansas side of the line." Despite the frequent and urgent appeals of Lowman and others, nothing was done.

Coinciding with the Yager raid, an even more disastrous fate befell another rebel company, this time in southern Kansas. In an effort to tap the pool of Southern symphathizers living in Colorado and New Mexico, Col. Charles Harrison, a former guerrilla under Quantrill, was commissioned by the Confederate high command to strike for the mountains, organize the recruits, then march the force back behind rebel lines. After selecting eighteen men for the perilous assignment, Harrison set off from Missouri and entered the Osage Indian reserve of southern Kansas.

"There was no human habitation to be seen and no living person discoverable," wrote one of the rebels, Warner Lewis, "and no incident worthy of note until the afternoon of the second day." Lewis continues:

> After crossing a ravine fringed with brush and small timber, we halted on an eminence just beyond for rest and rations. . . .
>
> We had begun saddling up to renew our journey when we discovered a body of men coming on our trail at full gallop. By the time we were all mounted they were in hailing distance, and proved to be a body of about 150 Indian warriors. To avoid a conflict we moved off at a brisk walk, and they followed us. We had not gone far until some of them fired and killed one of our men, Douglas Huffman; we then charged them vigorously and drove them back for some distance. My horse was killed in this charge and I was severely wounded in the shoulder with an arrow. I mounted the mule from which Huffman was killed. The Indians kept gathering strength from others coming up. We had a running fight for eight or ten miles. . . . Our horses were becoming exhausted, so we concluded to halt in the bed of a small stream that lay across our path, to give them rest. The Indians here got all around us at gunshot range, and kept up an incessant fire. We had only side arms and pistols and [the Indians] were out of [our] range. Here Frank Roberts was shot through the head, and fell from his horse. I immediately dismounted the mule and mounted Roberts' horse. . . . When our horses were rested we made a dash for liberty. On ascending the bank of the stream the saddle of Captain Park McLure . . . slipped back and turned and he fell into the hands of the savages. Harrison was shot in the face and was captured. . . .
>
> We broke the cordon as we dashed out, but from now on the race was even and our ranks much reduced. It was about two miles to the Verdigris River. When we were in about two hundred yards of the timber Woodson was caught. I tried to get the men to halt and give them a fire so as to let

him get into the timber, but did not succeed. We could not cross the stream with our horses, owing to the steepness of the banks on both sides. I went down to get a drink and heard the Indians coming to the bank below us. John Rafferty stood on the bank above me, and I said to him: "Follow me." He obeyed. We made our way up the stream under cover of the bank for about half a mile . . . and hearing the barking of dogs on the other side of the stream, we concluded it safest to secret ourselves in some dense bushes near the prairie until the darkness of the night came on.

Surviving the long and terror-filled night, and after an arduous trek back to Missouri, Lewis and Rafferty did indeed live to tell the tale. The rest of the company, including Col. Harrison, was not so lucky—all were found stripped, scalped, mutilated, and decapitated.

"Letters carried by the . . . band," said a Federal soldier shortly after, "showed that they were to meet the band which went to Council Grove somewhere on the outskirts of the settlements west." It was this apparent double motive that caused many Kansans to surmise that both ill-fated expeditions were merely feints of some bolder enterprise. Wrote Lawrence editor Hovey Lowman:

There is plausibility in the report . . . that [Yager's] raid into the interior of the State was part of a plan for an attack upon Lawrence. . . .

It was a bold stroke [on the part of Quantrill] to send sixty or seventy of his band straggling singly or in small parties through the State, to a rendezvous upon the verge of its western settlements. . . . When a party of bushwhackers, numbering that many, had commenced their work of slaughter and devastation through that sparsely settled section of the State, the whole military force of the State would be mustered and sent in pursuit of them. That would have left the field open to Lawrence, and the country adjacent depleted of men. . . .

The plan, if plan it was, miscarried. . . .

One month after the Yager raid, a band of bushwhackers dashed across the line and once again captured Shawnee. Before their retreat back to Missouri, the raiders killed four men and burned a large number of homes.

Unable to halt the fighting in Missouri or prevent raids into Kansas, district commander Maj. Gen. James Blunt resorted to showy public executions in a blatant attempt to placate loyalists. Although Quantrill persisted in his efforts to exchange prisoners with Blunt, the attempts were fruitless.

In frustration and anger, Col. B. F. Parker, a Confederate recruiter operating from the woods of western Missouri, addressed a letter to the Yankee general, demanding an explanation:

Sir, while your soldiers have been treated as ordinary prisoners of war, and the Union people respected in person and effects, our soldiers and citizens have been arrested and executed without trial. . . . Your officers . . . stationed

James Blunt
Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka

in our border counties, have without warrant or justification, arrested and shot private citizens, charging as a pretext to that cowardly act, that they fed, harbored and gave encouragement to bushwhackers. . . . Your officers, with or without your orders, have arrested or banished our ladies. . . . What, sir, can you expect from a people whose rights are trampled in the dust—whose property is taken ruthlessly . . . whose families have been outraged and subjected to indignities unbecoming the savage—whose friends and kindred have been shot and hanged for opposing the unwarrantable and unconstitutional invasion of our rights and country. All this has been done, and now you threaten us with extinction. To extirpate our race and . . . reduce to a wilderness the land we once inhabited. . . . Now, sir, being vested with authority to operate in this State, and protect as far as possible the people claiming citizenship and protection from the Confederate States Government, I therefore make known that I exact the rights of belligerents as ratified upon the first and original agreement between your Government and the Confederate States Government; to treat all men in arms if captured as prisoners of war, whether they be found in the woods or prairies. . . .

The perversions of the war for the Union to a war of extermination, forces upon us retaliation. . . . If another Confederate soldier or citizen is executed without due process of law, five (5) Union soldiers or citizens shall with their lives pay the forfeit. This, sir, shall be done independent of the consequences.

Ten days later, Blunt sent his reply:

I have the honor to say to you, after reading your long lecture, that you need not defer your proposed acts of retaliation. . . . It is of little consequence to me to know what are the instructions of the "Government you represent." It is sufficient for me to know that you and your motley crew are insurgents and assassins; that you are . . . engaged in murdering and plundering unarmed loyal citizens, thereby barring yourselves of all rights and considerations extended to prisoners of war.

I have instructed the officers in command of troops in the border counties of Missouri . . . that every rebel, or rebel sympathizer, who gives aid, directly or indirectly, shall be destroyed or expelled from the military District. These instructions will not exempt females from the rule. Experience has taught that the bite of a she adder is as poisonous and productive of mischief as the bite of any other venomous reptile. Therefore all persons known to be in arms against the Federal authorities of this District, will be summarily put to death when captured. The only Constitutional right that will be granted them, will be the right to make choice of the quality of rope with which they will be hung.

Good to his word, Blunt continued the no-quarter policy. Before a crowd of three thousand at Kansas City, one captured partisan found himself the general's next victim. A newspaper reporter was on hand to record the last moments of Jim Vaughn:

We observed him closely as he rode up toward the gallows, and his countenance, as he looked about upon the green fields and hills, so soon to be shut out from his gaze forever, wore a very saddened expression. But as the wagon stopped and he got out to ascend the scaffold, he evidently nerved himself for the scene. As soon as he had ascended the scaffold he looked about with an unconcerned, nonchalantic air of bravado and sat down upon the railing. He was a fine looking young man, evidently of more than ordinary mind, and with capabilities to have been an honor to himself and a blessing instead of a curse to the community.

He was about 23 years of age, large and powerfully built. He talked considerably with the officers on the platform, but in so low a tone that we could not catch his words. He took out some trinkets of various kinds and some money, both Confederate scrip and United States notes, and gave them to the officer to forward to his sisters, who are now confined in Fort Leavenworth. He then turned and addressed the crowd in a tone of mingled defiance and bravado. He died, he said, a Southern man, and hoped he should go to a better world. Then, the fiend gleaming from his hardened face, he proceeded to threaten vengeance upon the crowd, saying that some of them would suffer for his death. . . . There was no gleam of penitence for his life of crime and sin; no relenting in the awful presence of death, but an air of bitterness and even bloodthirstiness, even while saying that he hoped to go to a better world. He desired that his friends should be told how he

died, and that his body should be decently interred. When he had finished his arms were pinioned closely, the black cap was drawn over his face, and he was led upon the trap. He seemed fearful as he stepped upon it and asked somewhat sharply, "You are not going to *push* me off, are you?"

He stood a moment, and said, "This is my last look . . . let her slide." The drop fell, and the hardened criminal passed to the other world. Life was extinct in fifteen minutes; at the end of seventeen minutes he was cut down. . . .

Learning of Vaughn's death, and with the massacre at Council Grove in mind, on June 17, 1863, guerrillas led by George Todd ambushed an unwary Union column just south of Westport. When the smoke and dust had cleared, fourteen troopers lay dead in the road, including many who were executed while wounded. Reaching the scene a short time later, a Federal relief force found a slip of paper locked between the teeth of a victim: "Remember the dying words of Jim Vaughn."

Coinciding with the Westport ambush, and to the joy of almost everyone, James Blunt was finally removed as district commander and Brig. Gen. Thomas Ewing, Jr. took his place. Aggressive and ambitious, Ewing was determined to institute a series of tough new measures in hopes of ending the increasingly vicious border war. Immediately following the ambush, Ewing's troops saddled up. In a letter to his parents, Job Trapp describes one hunt:

We started straight out and patrolled the country until . . . dark, and at daylight next morning resumed the scout. We struck their trail and followed it up for several hours, when we came to a thick patch of brush. Here we approached cautiously until within ten steps of their camp. One of them raised up and began to rub his eyes, when a piece of cold lead struck him about the heart. We killed 4 and wounded one. . . . Not a man of us received a scratch.

In addition to an energetic policy in the field, Ewing, a brother-in-law of William Tecumseh Sherman, also stepped up the campaign against civilians. When steamboats plying the Missouri were repeatedly fired upon by partisans near Sibley, Federal soldiers moved in. "About a dozen buildings including a large warehouse and a church" were burned to the ground, wrote Sherman Bodwell in his diary, "setting one or two families in the street." Bodwell goes on:

Men seen circulating about a farm house a half mile to our left. Squad of cavalry sent over. Barn took fire, and about the time it could be cleared of furniture house too. Other buildings also, and all went up in a blaze of glory and a heavy smoke. . . . Reached Independence about 7 p.m. having marched about 35 miles since last night. One bushwhacker killed, probably others wounded, a good number of horses taken, and Sibley "gone up" principally.

Elvira Scott
Saline County Historical Society, Marshall, Missouri

Other towns and villages in the ill-fated district suffered similarly.

Even more feared by Missourians than Ewing's troops were the Kansas Red Legs, a company of Federal marauders whose red leather gaiters gave them their name. While Union authorities looked the other way, the theft of horses and livestock was the Red Legs' primary mission, although the gang, led by George Hoyt, often carried out random terroristic raids on the helpless communities of western Missouri. From Miami, Elvira Scott recorded in her diary one such encounter:

> They were about the lowest, most desperate looking specimens of humanity it has ever been my lot to witness. I was terribly frightened & excited & unwell. . . .
>
> But I did not dare to refuse them. So I . . . invited them to be seated, & set the table myself with care. I saw that they were ripe for mischief, & that all they wanted was the least pretext. I was resolved not to give them the . . . chance. I got them the best dinner I could, & they did it ample justice. . . . The yard was full of roses & other flowers. They pulled loads of them. . . . Not that they loved flowers, but that they wanted to do mischief. I helped them gather flowers & treated them very politely. One desperate looking one, with only one eye, said that he would take Charley, my old horse that was feeding in the yard. I told him that no one used

Charley but myself; that he was not fit for them. He answered that he could turn him into greenbacks; said that he had a packfull that he had made that way. . . .

After remaining an hour they took their leave without molesting anything but the roses & strawberries.

I was just congratulating myself . . . when . . . my nearest neighbor screamed out to me in an excited manner to run to the front yard—that they had [my husband, John]. When I got there one of the soldiers, who was drunk, had hold of him. They seemed to be struggling together, or, rather, the soldier was shoving John before him with his gun. In an instant I was between them, holding both of them apart as well as I could. I was too much excited to know what I was doing, only acting from impulse. I kept between them until we got around to the dining room door, when the man thrust me out from between them. But I got back. As I did so, I felt the gun come against my back, but I maintained my position. He was swearing that he would shoot John every step he took, & was so enraged that he was frightful to look at. . . .

As the man was too angry & too drunk to reason with, I held him fast by the arm. He was swearing that he would shoot John if he moved a step, & yet he was ordering him to go get his horse at once. I answered that the horse would be had instantly, told him to be quiet, & asked him what was the matter; what he wanted. I learned that John was one of the hostages. . . . They were to take several prominent citizens, the best men in the place, to hold as hostages.

The emergency unloosed my tongue. If ever I was gifted with eloquence it was then brought out. I must have made an appeal, judging by the effects, for in a few minutes the man was softened, became obliging, even kind, & permitted John to go & get his horse. . . . The rest of the crowd of drunken soldiers were up on the hill by this time, yelling like fiends.

The Red Legs finally lined up Scott and five other citizens "with gray heads" and led them away as prisoners. Although the Miami men were soon released unharmed, other communities were not so fortunate. Willard Mendenhall vividly describes in his journal the horror that swept the Lexington region:

Fryday 3rd
The Red Leg's . . . are near here yesterday, they burned several houses, killed seven men and carried off what they wanted. As everything in the country is at thare mercy many persons are leaving town going to St. Louis and other places.

Saturday 4th
I . . . heard of the Red Leg committing depradations in Texas Pararie. The roads are lined with movers driven away from thare homes by Red Legs.

Sunday 5th
The roads are traveled today by many movers comeing to Lexington and

crossing the river. The Red Legs are desolating the country, they have no respect fore any person's political opinions. They appear to be a band of murderers and robers. The conservative Union men here are persecuted by them as mutch as the secessionists. Doc Higgins called this evening, he told me that one of the movers that passed here told him the Red Leg's had killed abought 50 men in his neighbourhood in the last few days.

The crimes of the Kansas Red Legs and other Federal soldiers became so flagrant that provisional Missouri governor Hamilton R. Gamble at last lashed out:

St. Louis May 2 1863.

Mr. President Lincoln
Sir. . . . I wish to call your attention now to the perpetration of murders and arsons and other outrages committed by persons connected with the Army, over which you are Commander in Chief, and whose crimes you have the power to restrain. . . . The Kansas Officers reports the killing of many bushwhackers. . . . The information coming to me is that these bushwhackers were men shot down on their own farms or in their own houses peaceably pursuing their own occupations—That many of them were what are here called "Southern Sympathisers" I think probable, while I am very credibly informed that some were known Union men who were unfortunately in possession of slaves or other property coveted by the *Patriots*. . . . Will you . . . allow butcheries to go on by men whom you have the Authority to control?

Despite Gamble's plea, the Red Leg rampage continued.

Two days after the still-shaken village was raided by Red Legs, little Miami, Missouri, was paid a visit of a different sort. Once more a beleaguered Elvira Scott took pen in hand:

We had got seated to work after dinner, making a dress & hoping we were going to have a little quiet once more, when I saw a company of what I supposed were Federals fairly flying over town. Directly I heard shots firing in rapid succession. I started downtown, frightened almost out of senses. Mrs. Harley hollered to me that they were Rebels which frightened me worse if anything. . . . I kept right on to town.

The men were all collected in a squad in the street, surrounded by armed Rebels. They had arrested one notorious character named Bob Myer. . . . He came to town with two women; was drinking & abusing people generally. He was not in the Federal service, but retained the uniform & arms in order to be able to insult & abuse people that were defenseless. He had threatened the lives of several, & was swearing that he would kill Dr. Gaines on sight when they lit down on him. After they got him I suppose he felt his fate was sealed. He broke guard & ran down the hollow by the warehouse. Three of them pursued, & the firing [I heard] was at him. He refused to surrender & was killed almost instantly.

They rode up from killing him just after I got down the street. They looked frightful with their long carbines & belts full of pistols. One of them had a military man, rather notorious, named Ellson; he shook him by the collar swearing they would kill him with a pistol at his head. I could not stand the sight, for I was afraid he would be killed. The men [i.e., the citizens] were all as pale as death, knowing the retaliation that would follow.

I talked with three of the men; asked one what they came for, bringing such trouble upon us, knowing what would follow their visit. He answered that it was nothing when we got used to it; that he had been hung three times & that if the Federals burned houses & shot people they would burn & shoot too; that innocent Southern men had been shot & that they would avenge their death. . . .

The men remained in town two or three hours. They got what they wanted at the stores, offering to pay in Confederate money which was not accepted. . . . They seemed quite at their ease. They were nicely dressed, very clean, fine looking men; polite, refined, & courteous in their manners, their language correct & gentlemanly. I was perfectly amazed at the contrast between them & the party of Federals that had visited us last. Such horses & riders, such armed & such drilled men I never saw as these. It was like clockwork. I confess I expected to see dirty, ruffianly, desperate wretches, judging from what I had heard of them. . . .

Well, they rode out of town just before night, in perfect order on their beautiful horses, without touching whiskey while they were here, looking pleased & happy, with a smile & a bow & hat raised if they caught a glimpse of a lady behind some curtain. No one would have dreamed that they had murdered & sent into eternity one poor wicked man with all his guilt. . . .

They disappeared as they came, but they left sadness behind them.

Prudently, while the guerrillas were in town, several citizens had sheltered a visiting tax collector in hopes that the expected Federal retribution might thereby be allayed.

While events south of the Missouri were building to a crisis during the summer of 1863, affairs north of the river were reaching a bloody pitch as well. Wrote diarist Martha McDonald from Andrew County:

> Sad oh! What sad times are we having now. We can realize now what war is for its effects are seen all around us. Some fifteen citizens of Andrew county have been murdered in cold blood in the last few weeks. Innocent men that had been at home with their families.

While Yankee death squads spread death and terror, the bushwhackers were not idle. One guerrilla band, led by Fernando Scott and young Joe Hart, was renowned for its mobility, ranging from Kansas City as far north as the Nebraska line. On the afternoon of May 19, 1863, Scott, Frank James, and other members of the group were seen prowling in the vicinity of Richfield. In his official report, a Union officer tells what happened next:

> Two of them went to a house in the neighborhood, acting as if drunk, swearing they were Quantrill's men. . . . The men at whose house they were, started immediately after they left, and reported to Lieutenant [Louis] Grafenstein. . . . Grafenstein and Captain [Darius] Sessions and 3 men started out to look into the matter. After getting out of the place 1 1/2 miles, they were fired upon from the thick brush. Captain Sessions and Private Rapp fell the first fire; Lieutenant Grafenstein was hit soon after, and had to stop; the three were then rushed upon by the party of murderers. Rapp was robbed and left for dead. Captain Sessions was shot again two or three times through the head, and Lieutenant Grafenstein, after surrendering himself a prisoner, was coolly shot twice through the head also (a woman at the same time, nearby, begging for his life). They both were stripped and plundered also. The gang then pursued the two remaining number of the squad . . . toward Richfield [and] reached that place in about twenty minutes after the first firing, the two boys beating them in and escaping from them. In the meantime, someone passing near where Rapp was brought him in to town, and was having his wounds dressed. After the devils entered the town, [they] learned that Rapp was not killed; one of them went directly to him and shot him three times more. . . .

Two days later, hearing that most of the garrison had left on a scout, Hart, Scott, and their men swept into the square at Plattsburg. In a letter to a friend, the editor of the local newspaper relates what occurred:

> We had but 4 or 5 muskets in town, and only the ammunition with which they were charged. This knowledge had been conveyed to the cowardly assassins by their hellish sympathizers in town, and consequently they continued their attack until the fire of the defenders being exhausted, the town was left completely at their mercy. . . .
>
> Every Union man was shot at as he attempted to escape from the town, as civilized men shoot at mad dogs. We were the target for three of their bullets, all of which, fortunately for us, missed their aim. . . .
>
> My office . . . was entirely gutted, cases emptied, stands broken to pieces, press battered and forms thrown through the windows—everything knocked into pie.

Although the fire was later extinguished, before the bushwhackers rode out they torched the courthouse and stole upwards of $50,000.

As elsewhere along the western border, Hart and his men knew that if captured they would receive no quarter. After the raiders killed several militiamen north of St. Joseph, William Linville was captured and taken to the city, where he was found guilty of participating in the affair. A chronicler continues:

> The hanging took place at noon a few rods southeast of the Patee House. . . . The hills adjacent were covered by many witnesses of the sad scene. . . .
>
> The young man was calm and self-possessed to a remarkable degree. Being granted permission to speak, he said:

"The witnesses who swore against me swore to the wrong man. You hang an innocent man. You take the life of the wrong person. I left the Confederate army on the 20th of May last, and since then, have never fired a gun or pistol at any human being. The witnesses who swore that I killed that man were mistaken. I did no crime, but it can't be helped now. Remember, all of you, that I die innocent. I am perfectly willing and ready to die, for I expect to find rest in another world. I die an innocent man."

When the time approached for the execution, a prayer was offered, after which, with unfaltering step, Linville approached the drop in the platform and stood unmoved while the sheriff, assisted by the physicians, adjusted the fatal noose. A glove was placed in his fingers, which was to be dropped by him to indicate his readiness, the black cap was drawn over his face, the minister and all on the platform bade him good-bye. At a few minutes before 12 o'clock he dropped the glove, the cord was cut and all was over.

Because of their life on the run, communication between guerrillas and their families was often difficult. Many, however, like Joe Hart, maintained a tenuous link with loved ones:

Chillicothe, Livingston Co., Mo.,
July 13, 1863

Dear Parents: Being up in this country with a body of Partisan Rangers on a raid, I have concluded to drop a few lines to you, letting you know of my health, which is fine, and also of my operations, and of my brother George. I saw some boys, and have some now under me, just up from the army, who saw George about the 20th of May, and after the battle of Cape Girardeau. He was well and in excellent spirits. John is dead. He was wounded at Springfield, January 4th, 1863, and died soon after. Don't weep over him. He fell like a hero, and [his officers] say that he never flinched amid a shower of balls which fell so thickly around him, but led the charge on the enemy with the coolness and gallantry of a veteran. . . . At Pea Ridge his comrades say that he was always in advance, uncovered and exposed, yet unmoved and immovable. . . . I, with you, will always mourn his untimely death, yet he could not have died in a better cause. . . .

I captured a lot of Andrew [County] Militia and killed several. The boys under my command caught Harrison Burns, George Henry and someone else . . . and killed them, as they refused to give up their arms . . . and attempted to shoot whilst in the house, when they were killed in the presence of the women. I could not help it. It was their own fault—they should have surrendered. . . . They helped to murder George Breckinridge and old Sam Mason, and shot Mrs. Mason in the arm. . . .

I am going to . . . kill off Andrew County—every last devil—and they know it. You bet they fly when they hear of me up here.—They say I am a damned sight worse than Quantrill, and that my men would sooner die than live. . . .

I was wounded in the head not long ago, but am well now. We, twelve of us, charged seventy-one feds with our navy revolvers a few days ago . . . killing [many], capturing fifty breech-loading rifles, fifty-four or fifty-five navy revolvers, and about sixty horses with their equipage, and lost only three killed—none wounded or taken.

I remain your son, Joe

Joe Hart's parents never received the blood-soaked letter. That same day, near Spring Hill, their son was shot through the neck and killed in a skirmish with Missouri militiamen.

Meanwhile, south of the river, events were rapidly unfolding. Besides an active policy in western Missouri, Thomas Ewing also worked to give his home state, Kansas, its long-sought protection. Shortly after assuming command, the young general established a chain of military posts down the state line. Ewing was confident that this border guard, with large camps of well-armed cavalry every twelve miles or so, not only would prevent small raids into Kansas but would greatly aid in alerting the interior of the state should larger ones develop. Most Kansans agreed. Another plan formulated by the general was the arrest and imprisonment of guerrilla families living in his district and their banishment from Missouri. With loved ones elsewhere, so the reasoning ran, the bushwhackers would no longer feel compelled to stay and fight.

During the summer of 1863, large numbers of women and children were thus rounded up and jailed prior to their exile south. Mattie Lykins of Kansas City describes what happened to one group of captives:

As a place of imprisonment for such in this city, an old dilapidated brick building on the levee . . . was taken possession of by the military authorities and set apart as a prison for rebel women. After the building had been occupied as such for some time it became so infested with rats and vermin of all kinds as to render it unfit for human beings to live in. Even the health of the guards, who had access to the river for bathing, suffered so much from the stench and torture of the vermin as to lead them to appeal to headquarters for a change of location. According to their request, a building was selected which stood about the middle of the block on Grand avenue between 13th and 14th streets. The house selected belonged to General [George Caleb] Bingham, who . . . was treasurer of the state and living in Jefferson City. . . . Thomas Ewing. . . . did not notify General Bingham that his building was needed for a prison, but simply took possession of it and ordered the women prisoners transferred to it and confined in the third story which General Bingham had used for his studio.

The . . . block was so constructed that the sleepers of the floors served the purpose of braces to the dividing walls of each building. The sleepers of the

first floor rested on brick pillars in the cellar. . . . I was told that on investigation it was learned . . . that the building had been weakened by the removal of the brick pillars which supported the first floor and further that some of the sleepers of the adjoining buildings on both sides had also been removed, thus weakening the dividing walls beyond safety. By whom this act was done was not known, for what purpose was left to conjecture. . . . One hot day [August 13], about two o'clock, this prison fell, burying beneath its walls a number of its inmates, four of whom were dreadfully mangled and crushed. . . . In less than an hour after the building fell, I was informed by some of the women prisoners that they had been told repeatedly by their guards that this house was giving away and would eventually fall. "But," they said, "we had so often been told during our imprisonment equally as alarming stories which proved false that we paid no attention to this one; yet every few days we heard the building crack, which was invariably followed by the falling of pieces of plastering from the ceiling." Doctor Joshua Thorne . . . was at that time chief surgeon of the hospital at this place. While I stood beside him near the building, watching the removal of the living and the dead from the debris, someone remarked to him that they supposed some of the soldiers on guard would be found buried beneath the ruins. "No," replied Doctor Thorne, "not a bluecoat will be found; every man who has been detailed to stand guard at this prison for the last few days and weeks knew the house to be unsafe and have kept themselves at a safe distance from the trembling walls. I knew the building to be unsafe," he continued, "and notified the military authorities of the fact, and suggested the removal of the women prisoners, but my suggestion was not heeded and before you is the result."

In all, five women died in the disaster, and several more were crippled for life.

When the bushwhackers learned of the prison collapse, hundreds set their sights on swift, bloody revenge. The reaction of John McCorkle was typical:

We could stand no more. . . . A loved sister foully murdered and the widow of a dead brother seriously hurt by a set of men to whom the name assassins, murderers and cutthroats would be a compliment. . . . My God, did we not have enough to make us desperate and thirst for revenge? We tried to fight like soldiers, but were declared outlaws, hunted under a black flag and murdered like beasts. The homes of our friends burned, our aged sires who dared sympathize with us had been either hung or shot in the presence of their families and all their furniture and provisions loaded in wagons and with our livestock taken to the state of Kansas. The beautiful farming country of [western Missouri was] worse than a desert, and on every hillside stood lone blackened chimneys, sad sentinels and monuments to the memory of our once happy homes. . . . And now our innocent and beautiful girls had been murdered in a most foul, brutal, savage and damnable manner. We were determined to have revenge. . . .

No place in America seemed a more suitable site to get that revenge than Lawrence, Kansas. Not only was the settlement an old free-state stronghold of territorial times, but the beautiful, prosperous town of three thousand was home to Sen. James Lane. Lawrence was also headquarters to the deadly Red Legs as well as one of the great havens for runaway slaves. Thus, when Quantrill addressed the assembled guerrilla leaders of western Missouri shortly after the prison disaster, he had only one target in mind:

> The Kansan has been murdering and robbing our people for two years or more, and burned their houses by districts, hauled their household plunder, farming implements . . . to Kansas, driven off their cattle, . . . until forbearance has ceased to be a virtue. Lawrence is the great hot-bed of abolitionism in Kansas. All the plunder (or at least the bulk of it) stolen from Missouri will be found stored away in Lawrence. We can get more revenge and more money there than anywhere else in the State of Kansas.

When someone pointed out that, given the great distance and the thousands of Federals involved, to talk of such a raid was simply to talk of suicide, Quantrill agreed. "I consider it almost a forlorn hope," he admitted, "for, if we go, I don't know if anyone of us will get back to tell the story. . . . But," he quickly added, "if you never risk, you never gain."

In spite of the hopeless nature of the raid and the tremendous odds ahead, the group finally agreed that the attempt would be made. On the morning of August 19, 1863, Quantrill and a force that would soon swell to over four hundred men broke camp on the Blackwater River and began their long march toward the defended Kansas border.

Well aware of its reputation among Southerners earlier in the war, Lawrence had never lacked for defense. Beginning in the spring of 1861 and continuing throughout the next two years, a series of jarring alarms shattered the peace and tranquility of the town. Since each report of a rebel raid seemed more ominous than the last, defense measures correspondingly increased until eventually mounted patrols, marching militiamen, and artillery exercises became everyday events. Finally, in early August 1863, the greatest "scare" of the war rocked Lawrence to its foundation when it was reported that Quantrill and his men were approaching. As in the past, however, when the raiders failed to show, the alarm faded harmlessly away. Coming as it did on the heels of the smashing Union victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg, as well as Ewing's posting of Federal troops along the state line, many in Lawrence felt the war was finally on its last leg. The sentiments of the town were summed up in a sermon delivered by the Reverend George Paddock from the pulpit of the Methodist church:

> The contest has been long and doubtful. . . . Had we failed in that dark hour to defeat [Gen. Robert E.] Lee [and] take Vicksburg . . . ; had we failed at this critical moment, probably we had fallen under the giant arm of our enemies, fallen to rise no more as a nation of the first order. . . . What then ought to be our gratitude, when we reflect that at this critical moment, the crisis, God interposed. "The lot was cast into the lap, the disposed thereof was of the Lord," and while we watched the event with heart-rending anxiety, it turned up *victory for the Union*. Thus the beginning of the end unmistakably appears. . . . Hope begins to smile again over the land.

Since a majority of those in Lawrence felt the war was winding down, it was with a sense of relief that the taxing military exercises were discontinued and the nightly patrols into the surrounding countryside disbanded.

In the late afternoon of August 20, Quantrill crossed the state line into Kansas within sight of the military post at Aubrey. Although the Federal captain there spread the alarm north and south, the shaken officer sent not a word west. Thus, while the surprised guerrillas continued their march unmolested, the one hundred Union cavalrymen at Aubrey held to their camp and merely observed.

Throughout the night and into the early morning of August 21, the long column of Missourians moved steadily toward Lawrence. In the words of William Gregg:

> On and on we marched over the Kansas plains and through the villages. . . . We were dubious that if we did collide with the Yanks, our greatest hope might be foiled; besides we were then too far advanced to engage anything short of Lawrence.
>
> We finally reached the Wakarusa river. The cock in his morning revel was crowing for day, and we were yet eight . . . miles from the coveted prize. The command was ordered to form fours and break into a trot. Reaching Franklin, daylight was fast approaching, and yet we were five miles from Lawrence. The command was then thrown into a gallop. A suburb of Lawrence was reached at [dawn].

Here, on a slight rise, Quantrill pulled up. When he beheld the sleeping town below and the total lack of defense, he quickly realized that the impossible had occurred: complete surprise had been achieved. Two weeks earlier, just after the latest alarm, Hovey Lowman of the Lawrence *State Journal* had coolly written:

> Mr. Quantrill is not invited to do bloody and infamous deeds upon unarmed men in any part of this State; but we venture to say that his chances for escaping punishment after trying on Lawrence just once are indeed slim—perhaps more so than in any other town in the State. Lawrence has ready for any emergency over *five hundred* fighting men—everyone of whom would like to see Quantrill.

7.

LAWRENCE

At five a.m. August 21, 1863, Sarah Fitch arose from her bed at the family home in southeast Lawrence and began stirring for the new day. Her husband, Edward, was yet asleep in the darkened house, as were the couple's three children, Julie, Charlie, and little Eddie. Wrote Sarah to Edward's parents back in Massachusetts:

> It had been a warm, still night & was a lovely morning—as calm and quiet as any of these mornings. . . . But few were out; nearly all were just rising—I went to call Miranda the girl who lived with us—(she had been out to [a] meeting late & was very tired). I then went to the baby who was nestling as tho' about to wake—Edward was in Julie's room—as it was cooler than in ours.

Around dusk the evening before, Sarah had gone into town to her father's bookstore where Edward worked as a clerk. After failing at farming, Edward was making a comeback in life and was thus clocking long hours. The visit in the shop and the stroll back home were among the few moments of each day when husband and wife could share each other undisturbed. Sarah continues:

> E. & I walked home together—going down the whole length of our principal business street speaking of all the new buildings & all the projected improvements—How bright—how glowing with happiness & prosperity seemed the future.

While the others in her home slept this beautiful, peaceful dawn, Sarah moved quietly about the rooms, continuing her morning rituals. Suddenly, something made her turn to the window.

> I heard the report of a pistol—then another & another—twenty or thirty shots—"Edward" said I—"what's all that about?" There was a camp of recruits—just back of our house & the shots were in that direction—"Oh" answered E—"it's the boys having some fun." But the shots came thicker & faster—Edward sprang to the window—"It's more than fun"—said he—"*the rebels are upon us.*"

Nearby, early riser Erastus Ladd was standing on the porch of his home. He, like most others in South Lawrence, heard what sounded like the "crackling of a bunch of . . . fire-crackers," but Ladd could see nothing because of the intervening houses. In his words:

> The shots were accompanied by cheers, or rather yells. In a few moments, as I stood looking, some three or four negroes . . . came rushing by, hallooing, "The secesh have come!" As I looked, the head of the column of fiends rushed down the street. . . . I saw that, too truly, "the secesh had come!" I went to call Eliza, but she was already up. We commenced to get up and dress the children as fast as possible.

Charging through the town, the column of horsemen spotted the camp of twenty-two unarmed Federal recruits. According to one horrified witness, Henry Clarke:

> Forty or fifty of the bushwhackers commenced firing into the tents, and the boys began to run out for safety. . . . As they ran the mounted horsemen followed, shooting them at every jump. One little fellow, about fifteen years old, after being shot at a dozen or more times, succeeded in reaching a point close to my house. Then a bullet struck him and he fell to his knees. As they came on he held up both hands and said:—"For God's sake don't murder me, don't murder me. . . ." The reply was:—"No quarter for you federal sons of bitches. . . ." Another one, a few yards behind him, and about five yards from my door, fell dead. I looked back at the tent which was leveled to the ground. The flag which had floated over it a man was lashing to his horse's tail. After securely fastening it he mounted his horse and rode off on a fast run, the flag trailing in the dust and being torn to ribbons.

With shouts of "On to the hotel!" the bushwhackers thundered through the business district toward the four-story Eldridge House. Despite the terror of the moment, the Reverend Richard Cordley looked on in awe:

> The horsemanship of the guerrillas was perfect. They rode with that ease and abandon which are acquired only by a life spent in the saddle, amid desperate scenes. Their horses scarcely seemed to touch the ground, and the riders sat with bodies and arms perfectly free, with revolvers on full cock, shooting at every house and man they passed, and yelling like demons at every bound. On each side of this stream of fire . . . were men falling dead and wounded, and women and children half dressed, running and screaming—some trying to escape from danger and some rushing to the side of their murdered friends.

State Provost Marshal Alexander Banks was asleep with his wife on the third floor of the Eldridge House. In his words:

> I was awakened . . . by the rapid discharge of firearms on Massachusetts Street, and when I arose and looked from the window, I saw a body of horse-

men riding rapidly up the street toward the hotel. . . . I told my wife that the guerrillas had taken the town and we began to dress hastily. Soon the hotel gong sounded loudly and the guests hastened into the corridors from their rooms. Many of them were scantily attired. . . . Their first idea was to escape by the rear, but just then a revolver cracked and, looking from a window into the back yard, I saw Joseph Eldridge, the landlord's brother, lying at the foot of the high fence with which the yard was enclosed. He was evidently wounded. I saw also that [the adjoining streets] were crowded with men and knew that escape was impossible in that quarter and that the building was surrounded. Resistance was then suggested but that was soon found to be out of the question as upon investigation we could only muster three or four weapons; and I was urged to surrender the house as speedily as possible.

Re-entering my room, I took a pillow slip from the bed and waved it from the window. Until this time a steady fusillade had been kept up on the windows at the front of the house, but when I appeared an order was given to cease firing and one of the raiders . . . stepped from the street to the sidewalk and asked if we had surrendered.

I replied that we would upon condition that the men should be held as prisoners and protected, and that the women should not be molested. He shouted back:

"All right. Come down. Your people won't be hurt. . . ."

Going down to the clerk's room on the next floor, I found the stairway leading to the street crowded with men, and asked one of them to bring one of their officers to me. He at once disappeared and in about five minutes the notorious and dreaded Terror of the Border stood facing me.

Quantrill. . . . had bluish-gray eyes and his hair and moustache were of a sandy brown. He was slender and graceful in build and there was nothing in his appearance to indicate the fiend incarnate he really was. . . .

"Quantrill. . . . is well-built, and very quiet, and even deliberate in speech and motion," noted another captive nearby.

Returning to Banks:

After nodding somewhat stiffly to each other. . . . I inquired of Quantrill what disposition he intended to make of us. . . . He stood a moment or so, evidently in thought, and then saying, "I will be back in a minute," went down the stairs. He returned almost immediately and told me to take the people to the City Hotel, which stood near the river bank where we would be safe. As the streets were full of drunken guerrillas galloping their horses . . . , shooting down citizens who attempted to escape, and yelling at the top of their voices, I insisted that he give us a guard, which he did, and we started to leave the hotel. . . .

Another captive, who also happened to be a correspondent of the New York *Daily Tribune*, continues:

We descended the stone steps of the hotel and crossed Massachusetts street . . . toward the east. . . .

> As our party moved along . . . straggling desperadoes crowded about us, filling the air with curses and threats. . . . One of them rode up on the right to the head of our column and ordered out of the ranks a young man walking just in front of me, who carried in his hand a traveling bag and was evidently a stranger—"here, step out here, you!" and when the young man had obeyed—"God damn you! you are a red leg!" and two successive shots from his revolver demonstrated the sincerity of his blood-thirsty design. A burst of horror and remonstrance rose from our whole party, and several of us rushed toward the infuriated wretch beseeching him not to murder in cold blood an inoffensive stranger. Fortunately—almost miraculously—neither bullet had taken effect, except . . . to cut slightly one leg of the victim's pantaloons; and one of our guard . . . David Porter . . . commanded the desperado to stop firing, and to molest no one in this party, who were promised protection by Quantrill. "Damn you," was the reply, "I shan't obey you, and I will shoot Quantrill himself!" "God damn you," replied Porter: "I am placed here to protect these prisoners, and I will do it, and," he added, presenting his revolver, "if you shoot a man of them, I will kill you . . . !"
>
> Quantrill, whom we spied in front of the City Hotel . . . speedily rode up. He said to us briefly: "One man, [Nathan] Stone (landlord of the City Hotel), was kind to me years ago . . . and I have promised to protect him and his family and house. All of you go over to the City Hotel . . . and *stay in it*, and you will be safe. But don't attempt to go into the streets."
>
> These few words brought us a relief hard to describe. We lost no time in following the direction given us, and were made welcome by the landlord to the shelter and protection of his house of refuge. . . .

After warning them that he would "put bullets" in anyone who harmed the captives, Quantrill dismissed his men, most of whom broke up into squads of five to ten each. A witness, William Kempf, takes up the narrative:

> After they had spread over town, they commenced to plunder in the most deliberate manner conceivable. Every store was broken open by a few men. . . . The first thing they looked after was the safe. . . . Every safe was bursted open when they could not get the key; but they were so well informed about everything that they sent, in several instances, to the private residences of persons, demanding the keys for the safes in the stores. . . .
>
> The hills above and the woods below the town were well guarded by guerrillas, so that it was impossible for persons living on the outskirts of town to make their escape. Everything was done by command, or well understood beforehand. . . .

One block west of the Eldridge sat the second-largest hotel in Lawrence, the Johnson House. Because it served as headquarters for the hated Red Legs, the building was quickly surrounded. Two doors north of the hotel, the men assembled in the home of Ralph and Getta Dix remained frozen by the shooting and screaming all around them. While Dix,

a large-scale wagon manufacturer, lived and slept in the upper floors of the spacious three-story house with his family, as did his three brothers and several employees, the work of the business was conducted in the paint room below as well as other shops nearby. Thus, with the sudden onslaught, Dix and the others awoke to find themselves trapped.

"Mr. Dix, his brothers and men awakening out of a sound sleep were naturally dazed," said the terrified wife, Getta. "I was unsuccessful in all my efforts . . . to get Mr. Dix and the others to hide." Getta goes on:

> Gradually my husband more fully realized the conditions and impending danger. Still he answered my pleadings for him to save himself: "No, I want to await developments, and aid the citizens. Our arms are across the street in the arsenal and surely some resistance will be made."
>
> While we were talking, another bunch of . . . rebels rode up to the Johnson House. I hastily barred our doors, put the three children in the men's arms, and while they waited I went out to see what was the real condition in the vicinity of our place. I saw men jumping from windows and fleeing for their lives. Several were killed as they ran. I realized the terrible situation and ran back to our house to urge Mr. Dix and the others not to attempt to leave the house.
>
> I found that my brother-in-law Frank had ventured down to the paint shop and was wounded. A guerrilla had shot him through the window. Chris Leener . . . was the next one to leave our home, and he was shot as he went down the back stairs. I ran to him and, as I tried to hold him, he was shot again by a passing guerrilla. The bullet just missed my face. I entered the house covered with powder and blood. Terror-stricken, I told my husband what I had seen and begged him and the others to remain in the house. . . . There was no possible means of escape.
>
> Mr. Dix gave me the children and told me to take them out of the house. They feared that our house had either been set on fire or would be. They decided it was best for them to go at once into the Johnson House, and remain in a vacant room until all was safe. Mr. Dix, his brother Steven and others reached a rear room of the Johnson House by crawling over the [adjoining] shop roof.
>
> I carried the babies, one at a time, down our eighteen steps, and put them in our coal shed at the end of the lot. I cautioned my little "Eddie" to watch his sisters carefully until I could get their colored nurse, Phoebe, to them. Going into the house again, I called and called to Phoebe, but received no reply. I went out on our landing and called to my husband: "Are you there, Ralph?" He answered: "Here, and all right." I then made another desperate effort to rouse Phoebe. When I mentioned the possibility of fire and begged her to come and stay with the children she called: "Mrs. Dix, I am here locked in the closet."
>
> The key was missing, so I ran to the kitchen and got the meat cleaver, and split the lock off the door. . . . I left Phoebe with the children when I saw that they were all right, and started back toward the hotel. I saw my

young brother-in-law Steven fall from the back stairs. Just as I reached him a number of women came out of the hotel. Mrs. Kallmer told me that Mr. Dix and several others had just been taken prisoners out the front door of the hotel, after having been promised protection if they would turn over their money and valuables. I left Steven's body with two . . . women who promised to protect it from burning.

I rushed around to the front of the hotel. There I found my husband standing on the sidewalk a prisoner with a Mr. Hanson, George Kallmer, John Cornell, a Mr. White, Mr. Goldman, and Joe Finley. The latter had been shot in the abdomen while in the hotel and had a death grip on Mr. Dix's arm. Going up to my . . . husband, I frantically cried: "Oh! my God, Ralph, have you given yourself up as a prisoner? Why did you do it? I know they will kill you."

He realized, I believe, for the first time his terrible situation. He asked me to beg them for his life, and I did all that was in human power to get him away from those heartless murderers. . . . Their only replies were curses upon curses. . . . One treacherous and hardened looking guerrilla boast[ed]: "I have killed seven 'red legs' and I'll kill eight more." Mr. Dix protested that he was not a "red leg" but all our pleadings were in vain.

In a few minutes the eight men were ordered across the street just . . . opposite our house. I clung to my husband in spite of their curses and threats. . . .

While coaxing and begging them, and explaining who my husband was, I got the promise of two of the guerrillas that they would not kill him. The third was a heartless wretch and said: "No, I won't let you take your husband away. I'm going to kill every damn one of them." I was still pleading when Ed Thompson ran down the street past us. He called to Mr. Dix saying: "Ralph, break and run. Now is your only chance," and as he entered our shop room he yelled again: "For God's sake run, Ralph." But Mr. Dix only said: "It's too late now."

Still I pleaded and the one murderous guerrilla drove his horse many times nearly onto me. Though I was the only woman in the street, I kept hold of my husband's arm with one hand, and with the other fought off the horse's head. . . . I walked sideways, holding to Mr. Dix and trying to hold the eye of the one unrelenting guerrilla. Just as we crossed the alley . . . I stumbled over a pile of rock. Instantly as my hold on Mr. Dix was released this one villainous man shot them all, very wittingly killing my husband first.

Mr. Dix was shot in the back, and he fell just as I raised myself from the rock. I stood, completely dazed and rigid, as I saw men falling to the right and left. I could not get to my husband at once, as the guerrillas were coming in every direction, riding through the alley, right over the dead bodies. . . .

While her home across the street went up in flames, Getta wandered away from the alley, drifting aimlessly about the town for some time, "dazed and not knowing what to do or which way to go." She continues:

Edward Fitch
Roger K. Fitch Collection

> I made my way back to the alley, and reached Mr. Dix's side. Crazed with grief, I raised him up, and begged him to speak to me. Suddenly I thought of the children. I picked up Mr. Dix's straw hat, and put it over his face and started to find my babies.

Many guerrillas carried pieces of paper on which were long rows of names, indicating those men in Lawrence most wanted. In the house-to-house searches that now followed, these "death lists" were referred to again and again.

"They very soon came to the house opposite us . . . ," wrote Sarah Fitch, as she and Edward peered from the windows.

> [The mother] with her little child came immediately over to us almost crazy with fright & apprehension—Edward was perfectly calm—He said we had better get all the clothing we could take, tied up—& if they came to our house try to save it & ourselves—of course we could not venture out before they came, for they were firing all about us constantly & . . . were screaming & yelling like so many demons from the infernal pit. . . . We had got the most of necessary clothing tied up . . . when all at once twenty or thirty of them swept up to the house, surrounded it, and in an instant, a ruffian, a demon burst open—oh that face . . . ! A coarse, brutal, bloodthirsty face—

inflamed with hellish passions & strong drink for he was evidently intoxicated—with horrid oaths he said not one of us should leave (he had not seen E. then). Another one was behind with perhaps one spark more of humanity in his bosom & he said "let the women & children go"—I was almost beside myself with terror for Edward—I *knew* his doom was sealed—that *demon*—who was there swearing—shouting—screaming—in *our* dear little parlor, with his revolver cocked in one hand—the matches lighted to fire our home in the other—I felt there was no mercy there. . . . He—that *witch*—turned & saw my Edward . . . so calm so self possessed—and without a word the deadly aim was taken—shot after shot in rapid succession—emptying his own revolver, then taking the weapon from the hand of his companion, and using all its load to make sure work of death. . . . I begged, I implored—I looked around on that circle of hard cruel faces—and I knew there was no help—*no help*—oh had God forgotten us—the match was applied to our house—I pleaded, I begged thrice to take him out—not to burn that precious body—But with an oath, a terrible oath—he pointed his pistol to my breast & said he would shoot me too if I didn't leave—& I took my screaming children—& went across the road & threw ourselves on the grass. In the meantime the house opposite ours had been fired & soon the flames made it too hot for us to remain there & we went further away & threw ourselves upon the ground—& watched the work of death & desolation go on.

At a home in the western section of Lawrence, four men, including Frederick Kimball, huddled in helpless terror. When bushwhackers finally burst through the door, they set the house on fire, then ordered the men out. *State Journal* editor Hovey Lowman tells what happened next:

Frederick, doubtless suspecting that their purpose was to shoot them as soon as they had them in the street where there was no possible chance for either resistance or escape, went out of the rear door and ran for the brush, which was growing quite thick in a little ravine. . . . He had reached the edge of the brush, beneath whose tangled branches . . . lay safety for him, when, through some fatal impression, he suddenly halted, in obedience to the repeated summons of the bushwhackers, and turned around, his face toward them, as if in the act of returning. One of his pursuers immediately fired upon him, the ball taking effect in the breast, up near the collar bone. He again commenced a retreat. Three or four fired at him as he turned, two shots taking effect in the back. Still the wounds did not seem to check his speed. He ran two or three hundred yards, apparently as briskly as though he had not been hurt. But he suddenly fell. He went down as though he had stumbled. But he did not rise. In a moment his pursuers were up to him. To make their work sure, they sent another bullet crashing through his brain.

One of the most sought men in Lawrence was Hugh Fisher. The Jayhawking preacher's exploits in Missouri and his reputation for robbing "secesh" altars and freeing slaves were well known along the border. Con-

sequently, and like his old friend, Sen. Jim Lane, who escaped by fleeing to a cornfield in his nightshirt, Hugh Fisher well knew he could expect no mercy if caught. Hence, when his home was surrounded by screaming riders, the frantic minister slipped into his tiny cellar and wedged himself between a dirt embankment and the ceiling. Nerving herself for the trial to come, Elizabeth Fisher turned to face the guerrillas. In the words of her husband:

> She had hardly got to the front part of the house when four of the murderous villains rode up to the front gate, dismounted and demanded admittance. I was lying just beneath the front hall . . . and near the front door, and could hear every word they said.
>
> Accosting my wife with oaths they inquired, "Is your husband about the house?"
>
> "Do you think," she replied, "that he would be fool enough to stay about the house and you killing everybody you can? No, sir; he left with the little boys when you first came into town."
>
> With an oath one of them contradicted her, and to her astonishment and mine replied, "I know a damned sight better; he's in the cellar; where is it?"
>
> "It is not very gentlemanly for you to doubt the word of a lady," she said, "and besides, I don't want you to swear in the presence of my children. The cellar is open, if you think he is there go look for yourselves."
>
> The men walked right over where I was lying, through the dining room into the kitchen and to the cellar doorway. There was no other entrance for light and it looked very dark down the steps, so one of them turned to her and remarked, "It is too dark for us to go down there without a light. . . ."
>
> They demanded a lamp and my wife, believing the only way to save me was to throw them off the track, freely gave it to them. As the man after taking it from her attempted to light it he turned the wick down into the bowl and turned to her to ask her assistance. She looked at it and told him he had ruined it, that it would take half an hour at least to get it so it would burn.
>
> This diverted them for the time and they set about ransacking the house. . . . Finally one of them said to her, "Haven't you another lamp in this house?"
>
> "Yes," she replied, "but it is upstairs."
>
> She was ordered to go and get it, but protested that she could not carry the baby and suggested that one of them must . . . hold the baby while his mother went for the lamp. . . .
>
> I heard my wife come down the front stairs and knew that in her hand she held the lighted lamp with which they were to search for me, and I was almost persuaded to save them the trouble by emerging from the cellar and surrendering myself into their hands. Just then, however, I heard the man to whom she handed the lamp say:
>
> "Come on, now, cock your revolvers and kill at sight."
>
> This determined my action and I gave up the thought of surrendering,

knowing that it meant certain death. As I reached this conclusion they began to descend the stairway into the cellar and my life hung as by a thread. . . .

I lay flat upon my back. . . . I turned my head on the flat, also, and lay as close to the earth as I possibly could. My left foot shook so that I was compelled to place my right foot upon it to keep it still. . . . My heart stood still. I did not breathe. Every act of my life came before me like a panorama. . . .

There were three of them, one having remained behind to guard the house. . . . The ceiling was low, and as the man who held the lamp in one hand, a cocked revolver in the other, stepped to the floor he was compelled to stoop to keep from striking his head against the joists. In stooping he brought the lighted lamp directly under his face, and the heat and glare caused him to hold it to one side, the side on which I was lying within a few feet of him. This threw the shadow of the bank of dirt over me. . . I could see them plainly, could even have reached over and touched the leader on the shoulder. But they did not see me and I was saved. . . . My wife had so completely thrown them off of their guard that their search was not thorough.

Although his escape was nothing short of miraculous, Hugh Fisher's ordeal was not quite over. Again a group of guerrillas came to the home, but this time the structure was set afire. Only by the superhuman efforts of his wife was Fisher saved a second time when he was led to safety while crouching under a heavy carpet that Elizabeth lugged outside past the waiting raiders.

When confronting the bushwhackers, sometimes boldness was the best defense, as James Legate learned:

I put on my coat and walked right down among them about two blocks from my house. They were killing three men, and I never . . . heard such pleading for a moment of life as came from these men, yet I was so stupefied that I was entirely unmoved by their prayers. I did not dare run, lest I might attract their attention as not being of their number. I turned slowly around, walked [east] up onto the hill . . . [and] went into the house of a Swede, which was filled with frightened women. . . . I was asked questions by each in their turn, but made no answer, walking straight through the house into the yard in the rear, where there were four rows of corn planted in the lot. I managed to find the center row, and I walked through to the fence, got over the fence and started on a run like a quarter horse. . . . Through fright and nerved to the quick. . . . I made a jump over a ditch about 2 feet wide [and] over a four-rail fence, into [a] hemp lot. . . .

I turned toward the timber, the grass was high, and there were little clumps of bushes. As I ran near one of the clumps . . . I saw a movement and started directly toward the clump to see what it was. As I reached the clump I found Solon O. Thatcher . . . hid in that clump of bushes. We were both equally frightened. He cried out "Oh, don't! don't, don't!" I jumped back . . .

and said, "Who are you, or I'll put a hole through you in a second?" He, recognizing my voice, in plaintive manner said, "Why, it's Solon; why, don't you know Solon?"

We conversed but a moment. I said that I was going to the river, and he followed me. We got down to the river and we heard the clatter of horses' feet coming pellmell toward us. He started back for the brush and I jumped into the river. They were so near to me I didn't dare to go into the river, so I backed up under a stump, under which the water had washed out. They came down, and seeing our footprints, waited but a moment, discussing what to do. Finally one of them discovered the footprints of . . . Thatcher going towards the brush. With a wild yell they all started in that direction.

As soon as they had gone I started to swim across the river. I swam, it seemed to me, faster than any steamboat I had ever rode upon. . . . I was two-thirds over the river when they all came back, and they began to shoot at me. Their shots all went wide of the mark. . . . I whirled over and swam on my back so that I could see them. One fellow got off his horse and says: "I can hit that Abolition son of a bitch." He rested his musket against a tree . . . I imagined that I could see to the very bottom of that gun, and thought that he would certainly hit me. I turned my eye. . . . [but] looked back before he had fired, and it seemed to me that when he pulled the trigger I could see the muzzle of the gun turn to the right, and I felt perfectly safe. The ball struck about 10 feet to my left. . . . I had then got near the shore [and safety].

After a cursing guerrilla set fire to their home, Erastus and Eliza Ladd decided that escape from the town was their only hope. Wrote Ladd to his father:

When the fellow had gone, I came up from the cellar . . . took the children's wagon, put Emma in it, and Georgie in her lap, took Winnie by the hand, and Eliza, a bundle of clothing for them and herself . . . and we went boldly out into the street, crossed over it, [and] went along the road out of town. . . . When we had gone a few rods, [a bushwhacker] crossed before us a few feet on another street, but he was walking his horse leisurely along, as though he was satisfied with what he had done. He had three or four muskets across the horn of his saddle, before him. He glanced at us, but said nothing, and I made no effort to attract his attention, I assure you. When we had gone about a mile, as we turned the corner of a fence, we saw two of their pickets some rods ahead of us. We turned to go in the opposite direction, and confronted two more that way. We turned back, and I told those with me—for there were at this time some ten or twelve women and children along—that I thought [they] were persons from the country, who had rode in so far to see what was going on. . . . As we approached them they turned and rode off towards some others, and left the road clear. I was told afterwards they were pickets.

Boldness did not always work, however, as Joseph Savage, his wife, Mary, and a German friend, who were fleeing the town in a buggy, soon

discovered. About a mile from their home, they approached the farm of Otis Longley. Savage tells what happened:

> We had got almost up to the house when . . . Longley came running out of the back door of the house towards the road, taking shelter behind a few rows of sugar cane. He was making a frightened noise, unlike any other sound I ever heard, and was closely followed by a raider with his gun leveled at him, who was cursing him for running. . . . Longley received his first shot when near the road fence. This shot took effect in his groin and Mr. L. ran and reeled along up to the fence, but was too weak to get over it. Here he received a second shot in the head at short range from another raider. . . . the ball going into his ear and through his mouth. He fell upon his hands and knees, when another pistol shot through his neck prostrated . . . him. Both raiders then got over the fence, and paid their compliments to our party—minus myself. . . .
>
> The first salution [*sic*] was: "Where are you going?"
>
> My wife answered: "We are getting away from the burning town."
>
> They replied: "We are not shooting women and children . . . but we will shoot this man" (the German), and ordered him to get out of the buggy. They then accused him of belonging to the militia, as he wore a blue soldier's jacket, and they at the same time reloaded the gun and pistol.
>
> The German, pale, trembling and weak with fear, managed to get out, and my wife then pled for his life, telling them he was sick and a stranger here, and they ought to be ashamed to be shooting such men. They looked him over,—and a pitiable sight he was, and then said: "Let him go, he is only a poor devil, anyway."

When the guerrillas finally moved on, Mary Savage stepped from the buggy. In her words:

> I went to Mr. Longley and turning him on his side found he was not yet dead and spoke to him, but he could not speak. . . . He opened his eyes and looked at me. A woman came at this time with a baby in her arms and I asked her if she would get some water and bathe the blood from his face and stay by him till help came as I did not dare to stay on Joseph's account. I was afraid he would come to me and they might see him. . . .

Mary's concern for her husband's safety was needless. Joseph remained fast in a nearby cornfield with no intention of straying. "I acknowledge being terribly frightened," he said. "It seemed to me that the whole country was filled with bushwhackers, and I crouched low and trembled like a hunted rabbit."

Upon entering town, Quantrill had warned his men that on pain of death no woman or child was to be molested. Wounds of the soul, however, recognized neither age nor gender. Remembered sixteen-year-old Loretta Hard:

> Reaching home, I entered from the back way. I found several of the rebels out in front after a man who was carrying a bundle of clothing . . . and his little four-year-old daughter in his arms, trying to get to the river. . . . Those on horseback were pressing closely and ordering him to put down the child, that they might shoot him. They had ordered my sister to come out and take the child, but she told them she could not leave her sick baby, which she was holding in her arms.
>
> Not knowing what was going on, I came to the door whereupon they told me to come out. I went to the man, who by this time had placed his bundle upon the ground and sat down on it, holding the little girl in his arms. He said [to me]: "No. When you take my child you take my life. She is my only shield."
>
> They swore at him and told him they would fix him, and, dismounting, one of the men placed his revolver close to his head and sent a bullet crashing through his brain. He fell in a heap, the little girl rolling from his arms. She climbed to her feet screaming and begging me to get her father for her. They shot him five or six times, picked his pockets and then left him lying there.

Even though they had harmed nothing and left with promises of protection, twice a gang of rebels visited the home of five-year-old Anna Morgen. When the second squad had entered, however, the little girl awoke from her sleep with a start and ran screaming from the house. Anna, although badly shaken, soon returned. She recalls:

> Still later, the third group of raiders arrived, most of them drunk. . . . My mother told them of the promises the others had given, but they said they had not made any such bargain. They grabbed one of my brothers, shook him and almost scared him to death. They held a gun to the head of another brother, but after awhile decided he was too young to kill. . . .
>
> The robbers went thru the house, searching for money or other valuables and then told my mother to take out what she wanted. . . .
>
> The bandits stirred up the husks in a mattress and started the fire. Then they piled on chairs and everything else that would burn and went away and left us. . . .

Anna and her family fled the flaming home and found refuge in a nearby cornfield. She continues:

> There mother and I and my brothers all lay down and rested, we were so tired. . . . [and] the day was oh, so hot. . . . The air was so still that the smoke from every burning house in Lawrence rose straight upwards, like a tall column.

Having already plundered its wealth, the bushwhackers turned their attention toward Massachusetts Street once more and set about torching the stores and offices that lined either side. Hovey Lowman describes one incident:

The Lawrence Massacre *Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka*

Out upon the verge of the built-up part of the street . . . was a gunsmith shop. It was owned and occupied by D. W. Palmer. He mended guns, and ate and slept there. It was a frail wooden structure, and escaped the notice of the guerrillas until their carnival of death was nearly over. A large band, drunk, passed out that way. Mr. Palmer and another man was standing in the door of the shop. As soon as they were observed they were fired upon. Both were wounded. The building was fired, the hands of the two wounded men tied together, and both flung into the burning building. The wounded men arose in the flames and struggled to the edge of the blazing building. The fiends stood around filling the air with their horrible shoutings of joy and exultation. As their victims neared the verge of the hungry flames, they thrust them back with their guns. The ropes were burned asunder. Mr. Palmer arose the last time. His hands were loosened and raised above his head, the red, fierce flames wrapped him in a sheet of unutterable agony. One cry—"O God save us!"—pierced the roar of the fire and the tumult without, and he sank into the embers as upon a bed. The hideous shout of triumph sent up by the fiends as they passed on recoiled.

When most of the raiders started assembling in the southern part of town prior to their retreat to Missouri, many of the citizens who had

weathered the storm "began to breathe free again." None had more reason to give thanks than those in the household of Judge Louis Carpenter. Throughout the long, hot morning, squad after squad of bushwhackers had approached the pretty brick home but, with a blend of "pleasant manner and tact," the judge had greeted each gang and somehow lived to tell of it. Peering from the window as the guerrillas prepared to leave Lawrence, the Carpenters felt that the worst was over.

"Just then there came a terrible pounding at our front door," wrote Carpenter's sister-in-law, Abigail Morse, "and Mrs. Carpenter opened the door."

> Mr. Carpenter, coming down the stairs, answered the question, "Where are you from?" He said, "New York," and the man replied "You New York fellows are the ones we are after." He pushed Mrs. Carpenter aside and rushed up the stairs after Mr. Carpenter, shooting, and swearing at the top of his voice.
>
> They entered different rooms, giving Mr. Carpenter a chance to come down and go to the cellar. There was no protection in the cellar, as the house was new and there were no partitions. Another man had come to help, and each one stationed at a window controlled every part of the cellar. Still they kept on shooting. Mr. Carpenter, bleeding and full of their bullets, left the cellar by the outside steps and fell in the back yard. Mrs. Carpenter fell over him, covering him, her arms about his head. The two assassins appeared and raising her arms, gave the fatal shot, then left to join the departing forces.

At nine A.M., with the city of Lawrence engulfed in smoke and flame, and with man and beast laden with plunder, Quantrill led his command due south and began the long retreat to Missouri. What had commenced at dawn in Lawrence was continued throughout the morning in the countryside. From his farm two miles south of town, Samuel Roberts takes up the narrative:

> Three men were shot between Lawrence and my place for daring to remain in sight—all of them quite peaceable men, and two of them too old to be called upon to do military duty. . . . A squad of six men were sent from the main body to visit my house. With guns cocked and eyes glaring more ferociously than a tiger's, they dash up to the buildings, apply the match to a large stack of Hungarian, then to the outbuildings, the barn and sheds and while these are rolling up their volumes of smoke and flames, the house is visited, trunks burst open, drawers and shelves ransacked, all valuables that could be crammed into pockets or strapped on their horses, taken and the rest enveloped in flames. . . .
>
> Everything inflammable was consumed—houses, furniture, bedding, clothing, books, provisions, outbuildings—all, all utterly destroyed. The work of eight years hard toil gone in as many minutes and another family thrown out of house and shelter.

> By the time the flames began to recede the next house south of mine is rolling up dense volumes of smoke and soon the next, and next and next; and now they visit the house of the old greyheaded Dunkard, who, alas, thought that his age and religion would protect him, but the infuriated demons, thirsting for blood, shot him down regardless of the poor old man's cries and entreaties to spare his life. The track by fire and sword of these murderous villains was made through the valleys and over the hills as far as the eye could reach.

With a huge pillar of smoke visible for up to thirty miles, the news from Lawrence spread panic throughout the surrounding communities. Charles Monroe Chase, an Illinois newspaper editor who happened to be traveling twenty miles south of the stricken city, describes the scene along his route:

> Everywhere we found people in the greatest state of alarm; men were arming themselves and rushing to and fro, some hastening towards Lawrence, and others in doubt what to do. Women, terrified, were moving children and household goods to the cornfields, and running about in the wildest confusion. Commotion, confusion, terror, and vengeance, all blended into one indescribable feeling, were driving the people into hurried and indiscriminate activity. As no one knew positively Quantrill's destination, everyone was momentarily expecting his habitation to be turned into a scene of fire and bloodshed.

From a lofty perch near Baldwin City, Julia Lovejoy and her little son watched in horror as the guerrillas approached their farm. In Julia's words:

> I could then see every house this side of Lawrence, with a volume of dense smoke arising from them as they advanced. . . . My neighbors began to clear their houses of all valuables, and secrete them in the woods and cornfields. I caught a little tin trunk with our valuable papers and husband's watch in it, that he had left as a kind of memento if he never returned from the war, and concealed it in tall weeds, and dragged out a trunk of clothing, and looked to Heaven for help in this time of need. Nearer and nearer they came; again I hied to my watchtower. Thank God they have taken another road—the Santa Fe Road, running parallel with [our road] from Lawrence to Baldwin City. At this instant rode up a squad of United States troops—three hundred in the whole, who had been in the saddle during the night, and nearly famished. I emptied the contents of my bread box, which sufficed for a few; they ate as they rode along. The robbers were at that moment firing Brooklyn, two miles off, and there our men, hundreds of whom were galloping over the prairies in every direction, headed them off from Baldwin City. . . .

Meanwhile, the stunned survivors of Lawrence were passing from one nightmare to the next. Because the attack had been so sudden and devas-

tating, many remained dazed and still uncertain what exactly had happened. Said a bewildered Louis Bodwell: "I have no record of time, and after the first waking, have not the least idea of the hour of any event; seeming to remember only here and there an incident stuck out like a flash of lightning in the general darkness."

"The sight that met us when coming out, I cannot describe," wrote another survivor:

> Well-known citizens were lying in front of the spot where their stores or residences had been, completely roasted. The bodies were crisp and nearly black. We thought, at first, that they were all negroes, till we recognized some of them. In handling the dead bodies, pieces of roasted flesh would remain in our hands. Soon our strength failed us in this horrible and sickening work. Many could not help crying like children. Women and little children were all over town, hunting for their husbands and fathers, and sad indeed was the scene when they did finally find them among the corpses laid out for recognition.

Noted another man who had survived the storm, a physician who hurried to assist:

> Some [bodies] were already collected into churches and shops, and they were constantly coming in. I found but few wounded—almost all who had been shot were killed outright. . . . No surgical instruments, no medicines nor spirits could be found for the poor sufferers. I cut out a couple of bullets with a sharp pen knife, and might have taken out more, but it looked a little too barbarous on my part, and I desisted till the proper instruments should arrive.

Some searchers found victims hideously mutilated by the inferno with head and limbs so completely burned away that only a "ghostly trunk" remained. Others found loved ones reduced to nightmarish skeletons. One woman carried away the remains of her husband "in a pail."

As he moved through the streets, the Reverend Richard Cordley recorded what he saw:

> About the ruins of the *Republican* printing office might be seen the editor, John Speer, raking among the embers in the cellar searching for the bones of his boy. One of his boys was dead, another could not be found. He had slept, as his father supposed, in the printing office up-stairs in the northeast corner. The father thought he must have perished where he lay, and searched for him under where he knew his bed had been. But he could find no signs of the body. . . . As one passed along the street, the sickening odor of burning flesh was oppressive. Sights of horror met him at every turn. Around one corner lay seventeen bodies. Back of a livery stable . . . lay five bodies piled in a heap. Going over the town one saw the dead everywhere, on the sidewalks, in the streets, among the weeds in the gardens, and in the few remaining homes. The women were going about carrying water to the

> wounded, and covering the dead with sheets. To protect the wounded from the burning sun, they sometimes spread an umbrella over them, and sometimes made a canopy with a sheet or shawl. . . . Now and then one came across a group, a mother and her children watching their dead beside the ashes of their home. A little later there could be seen a woman sitting among the ashes of a building, holding in her hands a blackened skull, fondling it and kissing it, and crying piteously over it. It was the skull of her husband, who was burned with the building. But there was not much weeping and not much wailing. It was beyond all that. It was too deep and serious for tears or lamentations. . . .
>
> No one realized the extent of the disaster until it was over. Every man was so isolated by the presence of the raiders in every part of the town, that each knew only what he saw. The magnitude of the disaster was beyond the wildest thought of even those who were in the midst of it.

"The people that are left," a visitor to Lawrence later added, "seem like those that have seen some great vision by which they were prostrated to the ground. . . ."

Over one hundred and fifty men killed, more than two hundred homes and businesses destroyed, an estimated $2.5 million in damage, the second-largest city in the state literally scorched from the face of the earth—the statistics reveal enough. Statistics, however, did not record the frightened young woman who awoke in horror the morning after to discover that her hair had turned white overnight, nor did statistics describe the wide, vacant eyes of Getta Dix and others as they sat throughout the next day and night by the bloating bodies of their husbands, fathers, and sons, staring off into the face of oblivion. The emotional scars of the massacre at Lawrence could not be neatly tabulated, nor could they simply be buried or rebuilt. They were forever.

After being nearly surrounded by an overwhelming force of pursuers south of Baldwin City, Quantrill ceased the burning and killing and rapidly resumed his retreat. According to Brig. Gen. Thomas Ewing, Jr., who, with several hundred cavalrymen armed with repeating rifles, had also joined the chase:

> [Quantrill] skillfully kept . . . his best mounted and best trained men in the rear, and often formed line of battle, to delay pursuit and give time and rest to the most wearied of his forces. By the time our scattered soldiers and citizens could get up and form line, the guerrillas' rear guard would, after a volley, break into column, and move off at a speed that defied pursuit. Thus the chase dragged through the afternoon, over the prairie, generally following no roads or paths. . . .

On into the night of August 21, the wily guerrilla leader "dodged" and "bewildered" his pursuers while at the same time he sidestepped lurking

ambuscades. The following day, with the loss of a mere handful of men, including only one in Lawrence itself, Quantrill led his force across the state line and into the safety of the Missouri woodlands.

With an almost perfect blend of nerve, stealth, and timing, the expedition to Lawrence proved to be one of the most remarkable cavalry raids of the war. But already, and although few at the time could have imagined, the blade of retribution was once again being raised over Missouri and a mighty, savage blow was about to fall.

8.

ORDER NO. 11

New York *Daily Times*, August 24, 1863:

> Quantrill's massacre at Lawrence is almost enough to curdle the blood with horror. In the history of the war thus far, full as it has been of dreadful scenes, there has been no such diabolical work as this indiscriminate slaughter of peaceful villagers. . . . There have been many displays of rebel barbarity, but none that have approached this. It would seem that even the rebel authorities in Richmond, steeped in wickedness as they are, cannot yet be so dead to all human feelings as to sanction such monstrous outrages. We find it impossible to believe that men who have ever borne the name of American can have been transformed . . . into such fiends incarnate. . . . It is a calamity of the most heartrending kind—an atrocity of unspeakable character.

Elsewhere throughout the North, news of the massacre "excited the deepest horror." Over the next few weeks, as the gruesome details arrived, no one doubted that this affair in a largely forgotten corner of the country was the single greatest atrocity of the Civil War. "If Jeff. Davis does not disown and punish the leader in these atrocities . . . ," demanded the Boston *Post*, "the world will hold him responsible for these acts of unparalleled cruelty and murder."

Although the Confederate leadership wisely withheld comment until all the facts were known, others in the South were not so circumspect. Acutely aware of the decisive role Lawrence had played in the pro-slavery struggle for territorial Kansas, well-versed on the holocaust Missourians had suffered during the past two years at the hands of Jayhawkers and Red Legs, rather than censure Quantrill, as leading Northerners demanded, on the contrary, influential Southerners praised him.

"The whole town swept," headlined the Charleston (S.C.) *Mercury*. "A perfect success."

Added the Richmond (Va.) *Examiner*: "The expedition to Lawrence was a gallant and perfectly fair blow at the enemy . . . as the population of Kansas is malignant and scoundrelly beyond description."

Henry Palmer
Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka

"Let the guerrilla system . . . be thoroughly carried out," echoed the *Daily Dispatch* of Richmond, "and if the barbarous retaliate . . . let the guerrillas, without waiting for orders, exact an eye for an eye and a life for a life."

The retribution meted out to Missourians for "aiding & abetting" Quantrill in his raid on Lawrence was not long in coming. Indeed, no sooner had they swarmed over the state line on the guerrillas' heels than thousands of angry Union pursuers went on a rampage of burning and killing. Those unfortunates residing on Quantrill's route were first to suffer. As Kansas cavalryman Sherman Bodwell reveals in his diary entry of August 24, such operations had become by now almost routine: "In the morning burned another house then went to [a home] & took breakfast. . . . Allowed them to carry out clothing before burning. . . . Marched North again burning a few more houses, & rested for the night. . . ."

Four days after the Lawrence massacre, border commander Thomas Ewing signed into law General Orders, No. 11. Since his earlier attempts to pacify western Missouri had obviously failed, the general now determined to make much of his district a desert. Except for a handful of loyalists living in or near federally garrisoned towns, all persons still oc-

cupying the four Missouri border counties in his district, roughly twenty thousand people, were ordered off the land within fifteen days. To enforce the edict, Ewing's men fanned out, and with savage efficiency they set about their task.

A Union officer, Capt. Henry Palmer, describes one night visit made by Kansas soldiers to the home of an aged man named Lawrence, "on the very day of the death by disease of Mrs. Lawrence":

> Mr. Lawrence was ordered to produce his money and silver plate, to which he answered that his money and silver were in a bank in Canada. [The troops] dragged old man Lawrence into the orchard in front of his home and three times hung him to a tree, to force him to produce the money and valuables wanted. Lawrence had told the truth, and his persecutors, leaving him nearer dead than alive, commenced a search of the house, opening drawers with an ax when locked, emptying trunks upon the floor, and ripping open bedticks. Passing from room to room, they had passed the coffin containing the remains of Mrs. Lawrence, resting on chairs in the parlor. One fellow . . . suggested that maybe money was hid in the coffin, and with that he knocked off the lid of the casket and searched for gold. A ring on the finger of the dead woman attracted his attention, and whipping out his bowie-knife he cut off the finger to release the ring. Before leaving [a soldier] said to the two terror-stricken daughters: "If you want to plant the old lady, drag her out, for we are going to fire the ranch." Unaided they dragged the coffin from the burning home, nursed their father back to life, and watched for the dawn of day.

Martin Rice describes another incident:

> On the morning of the 6th of September as we were making arrangements to leave, a squad of soldiers . . . came suddenly upon us, making prisoners of me, my son Isaac, and my son-in-law, informing us that we must go with them to where Colonel [Charles] Clark was stopping . . . a mile or more away. They also had taken . . . my nearest neighbor, and brought him along. We set out, hoping that under the circumstances we would not be detained long.

As they passed down the road, four others were rounded up, including one man seventy-five years of age. Rice goes on:

> Eight of us now were marched on three-quarters of a mile to the place of encampment. Here Colonel Clark, who had been scouting the country ever since the Lawrence massacre, met us and took down the name of each prisoner, and then retired into the underbrush nearby where some of his men were stationed, and we were permitted to sit down by the fence. . . .
>
> In a short time the colonel returned, and asked me which of the other persons was my son; and seeing that one of his young men had appropriated my son's hat to his own use, in a menacing manner he bade him restore it. He retired again. . . . During all this time, neither the officers or any of the men spoke a harsh or menacing word to any of us. Captain [Charles] Cole-

man, who had first taken us prisoners, then came to me and said: "You will take your son and travel." These words, but more particularly the manner in which they were spoken, gave me the first alarm as to any real danger to any of the party.

We immediately left as commanded, leaving our friends and neighbors behind. . . . In a very short time after reaching home, the report of several guns, in quick succession, alarmed us still more. I however persuaded myself, and tried to persuade the alarmed and distressed families that it might be the soldiers shooting fowls . . . for their breakfast. They would not, however, be so persuaded, and Miss Jane Cave heroically repaired to the spot and found the company gone, and the six prisoners all dead, some of them pierced with many balls.

Elsewhere, the homes of Missourians in the doomed region went up in flames. "One single squad of men burned 110 houses," admitted a Kansas officer, "some of them . . . worth, it is said, as high as $20,000."

In addition to Federal troops, George Hoyt and his Red Legs were also prowling western Missouri. The Red Leg approach was simple: Any Missourian sporting a new shirt or hat or riding a good horse was "strung up" on the spot. The treatment of women and children in Hoyt's path was hardly better. According to one young girl:

They piled all the bedding, barrels of molasses, sugar, all clothing and provisions in the yard and started a fire which destroyed everything, including the house and mill. The commanding officer drew a gun in Grandma's face. . . . They tried to force her to tell where Quantrill was, but she would not say a word. They left, taking all the horses, and cattle with them, leaving a pair of old oxen and a surrey they thought useless. . . . My grandfather was a cripple, walked with one crutch, so he and my grandmother with five small grandchildren they were caring for rode and the rest walked.

Like these refugees, thousands of similar households headed by old men or frightened women left their burning farms and embarked on the terrifying odyssey with no clear goal in mind. Frances Twyman, herself an exile, vividly recalls the confusion and suffering of those around her:

The road from Independence to Lexington was crowded with women and children, women walking with their babies in their arms, packs on their backs, and four or five children following after them—some crying for bread, some crying to be taken back to their homes. . . . O, how sad! I saw one woman driving an ox team. . . . There were three or four small children in the wagon. We came to a bridge that was almost perpendicular. . . . The oxen scented water, and she lost control of them; so here they went helter-skelter down the bridge. It looked like the wagon would turn a somersault over the oxen. We all thought the children would be killed, but a kind Providence watched over them. I will never forget how the mother looked, as she stood there helpless, crying and wringing her hands as she gave vent

> to her feelings by saying, "I wish all the Federals were in ——." Another woman had two cows hitched to a wagon; a little boy was leading them. There were some boughs on the wagon, an old-time coverlid stretched over them; inside the wagon was a very sick child. The wagon halted, the mother got out with her sick babe in her arms and seated herself under the friendly shade of a tree. It was apparent to all that the child was dying. There sat the mother with her child dying in her lap; her husband had been killed, she was forced to leave her home, driven out into the cold world with her little children. O, the anguish of that broken-hearted mother as she sat there, with tears streaming down her pale cheeks, knowing she was powerless to save her child. . . . The crowd surged on, women and children dragging their weary limbs through the dust and heat.

By September 9, two weeks after it was signed into law, the words composing Order No. 11 had been carried out, as one Federal officer put it, "to the letter." Added a Kansas soldier:

> The border counties of Missouri have almost as desolate an appearance as before the soil was trod by the white man. Not a man, woman or child is to be seen in the country to which Order No. 11 applies. . . . Chimneys mark the spot where once stood costly farm houses, cattle and hogs are fast destroying large fields of corn, prairie fires are burning up miles of good fencing every day or two, and turn which way you will, everything denotes a state of utter desolation and ruin.

General Orders, No. 11 was perhaps the harshest act of the U.S. government against its own people in American history. For obvious reasons statistics were not kept, but it is safe to assume that the death toll of innocent and guilty alike was well into the hundreds and the property loss far into the millions.

While the eyes of the nation were focused on Missouri, however, another purge was quietly proceeding, this time in Kansas. First blood came less than twenty-four hours after the massacre when a frenzied mob in Lawrence accused a resident of complicity in the raid and swiftly hanged him. As in Missouri, those of doubtful loyalty on Quantrill's route through Kansas could expect no mercy. "They have just brought in a prisoner that I suppose will be hung," wrote a woman from Black Jack, August 24. "He hid five Bushwhackers when they went through here."

Near Topeka, Osawatomie, Clinton, and other communities around the state, those suspected of pro-Southern proclivities were shot, beaten, or forced to flee for their lives. "Quantrill's spies were in Lawrence and told him when to strike," said the excited editor of the Leavenworth *Daily Conservative*. "We have several rebels here now, who would like to see Quantrill cut the throats of our citizens."

Despite the clear warnings, some pro-slavery Kansans failed to appreciate the fact that, after the bloodbath at Lawrence, the shadowy gray

Sam Wood
Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka

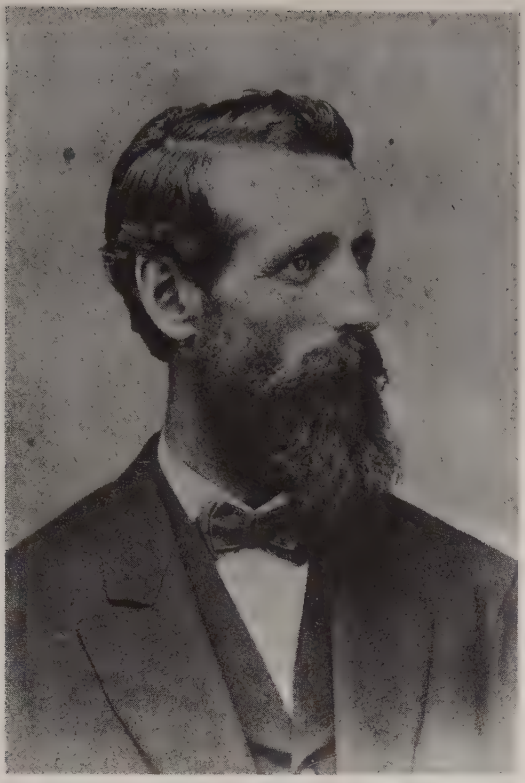
region they had so tenuously occupied since the territorial years no longer existed. "When the news of the destruction of Lawrence reached this place," reported Sam Wood, editor of the Council Grove *Press*, "one man slapped his hands, stamped his feet and exclaimed 'good! good! it is the best news I have heard lately.' . . ." Wood continues:

> We had scarcely got home when the story above was related to us. Rising we asked Mrs. Wood for a loaded revolver, and proceeded at once in search of the scoundrel. We found him at a dance at the hotel. We stated to him what we had heard, and demanded to know if he had used the language, he said he had in fun, and begged for his life. We told him he could not joke over our friends' dead bodies, and to walk outdoors and let us shoot him. He refused, when we dragged him out of doors. But he clung desperately to us, and it required considerable kicking and pounding to get him loose; but finally he broke and run. We snapped six times at him, when we discovered our revolver was not loaded. Mrs. Wood mistakenly gave us the wrong one.

While civilians, innocent and guilty alike, were being punished on both sides of the line, the guerrilla war continued. Even as General Ewing's Order No. 11 was being carried out, Federal troops were frantically scouting the Blue, Sni, and Blackwater country in search of

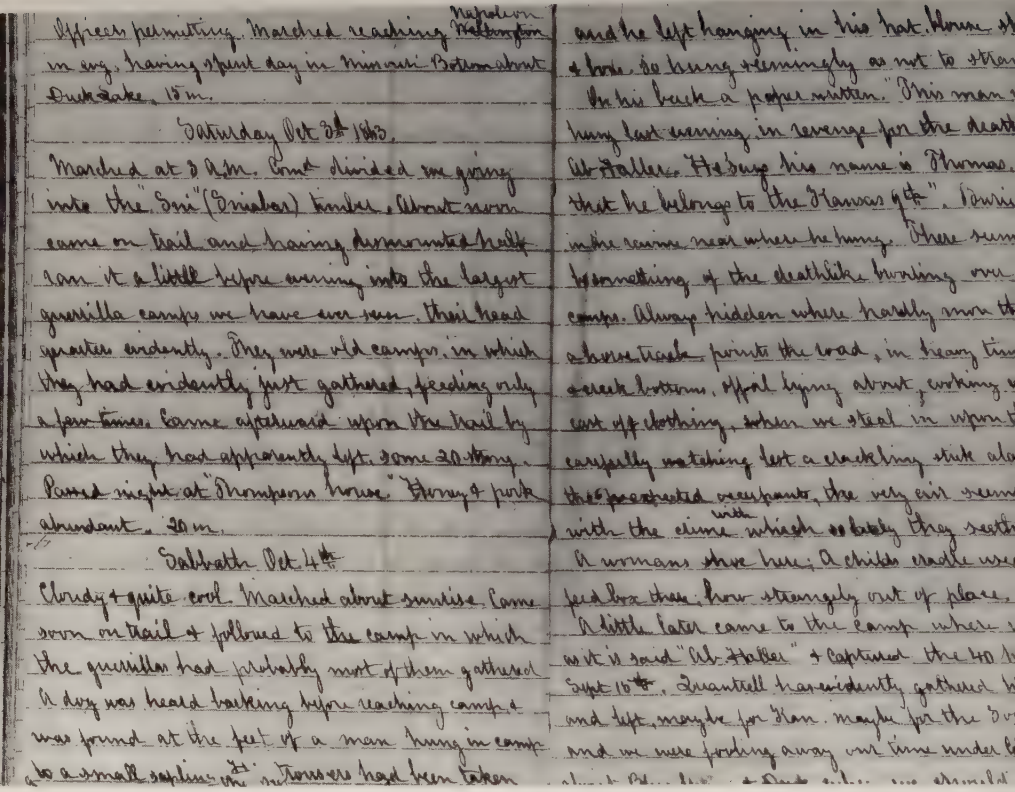
Quantrill. The diary of Sherman Bodwell records in terrifying detail the deadly game of cat and mouse:

> Sept 13
> Marched about sunrise. Command divided. "H" [company] going with Capt. Coleman . . . one of the most successful guerrilla hunters on the border. About 130 men. Left the road, and struck through the brush for some five miles dodging through thickets winding here & there through ravines, halting finally, hitching the horses close together, about half the men remaining with them, the rest scouring the country round. After lying close about an hour, several shots were fired near us. The skirmishers were just coming in when they saw a mounted man coming down toward them, through an opening. He drew one of his revolvers & came on flourishing and aiming. . . . Was halted at about 30 yards. "Who are you?" he asked. A volley knocked him from his horse, with a bullet through the head. He was about 25. Well dressed & his stripes indicated some office. Lay quiet a while longer, and struck through a rough timbered country. . . .
>
> Sept 15th
> Marched at 12m some 350 strong, by bye roads and through prairie reaching about daybreak a deep ravine, in which we dismounted, horses massed. They seemed to understand the matter and were very quiet. A little before sunrise leaving, half the men to bring up horses . . . & single file we struck down the ravine into the timber on Snye. We were still with Capt. Coleman. A hard march through thick underbrush ravines up and down steep rocky bluffs, where it seemed hardly possible for horses to follow. In about four hours halted, for horses to come up. Mounted, and kept on. . . . Lt. [John W.] Ridgway went in front. Sent back word to dismount some 15 men & send them up. Moved slowly. . . . [A] sharp fire was opened nearby. Broke into the brush after Coleman, and we rushed into a rebel camp. The Indians of the 9th and the bushwhackers starting a yell. . . . In going in passed one of the guerrillas, dead. Shot from his horse and finished with the knife. The horses were saddled, led out, cooking utensils broken and putting fire to the straw bedding &c we left it. Our dismounted men had discovered them as they were getting dinner. All were secure and at ease, talking whistling &c. Lay looking into the camp at 50 yards distance while we were coming up and forming. We could have corralled them nicely, but for two of them mounting and starting to water. They were sure to discover us, and the boys had to shoot them when the rest broke, leaving guns, horses, saddles, clothing &c. firing one volley as they left. Some forty horses taken, and much new homemade clothing, they seemingly having just fitted out for the winter.



Sherman Bodwell
Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka

Sept 26
Struck a horse track following it for a mile or two through timber. Maj. & Lt. dismounted, went to the front, and soon sent back for six or eight men dismounted, then for more. I went up with them & found we were at a creek crossing heavily tracked. Horses heard neighing near. Moved forward on the trail (some 15 of us) till we came in sight of a fellow sitting above, on a steep hillside reading. On picket apparently. Feared to move lest he should see us and give alarm. And feared to fire for the same reason. Four men fired by order, rather to his surprise judging by his movements. We dashed up the hill, and as we done it, found ourselves in camp. One fellow firing both barrels of a shotgun at the Lt. at about 20 steps. I lost my two shots by caps failing. Took eight horses, seven saddles. Toward evening, while following down a ravine to the Blue came on a foot track. Word sent back for half the men. . . . Came down into valley of Blue. Firing in front. And then a foot race up the timber after a party . . . we had driven from camp, three being unmounted. They fired back, and the hindmost especially used his shotgun with good grit. The race lasted for about 3/4 of a mile, the boys firing after them as they ran. Lt. R finally bringing down the last. I came up, just as the Lt. finished him with a shot through the head. Took



The diary of Sherman Bodwell *Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka*

supper and moved on to Franklins, threw out pickets & watched roads till late daylight.

Oct 1

Marched early, halted for breakfast, when command divided. . . . About 10 the Maj., Lt. & the advance came suddenly on two guerrillas mounted. One dismounted & took the brush but the Maj. brought him [down] with his holster pistol. I rode up. Lt. stood over him. His pockets having been searched & papers taken. . . . Was talking, claiming to be a prisoner &c. Lt. asked Maj. are you through with him? Maj. nodded assent. Lt. said to men standing about "mount your horses" & as they drew off aimed & fired the revolver, ball striking just back of the eye, & he was with his judge with all his imperfections on his head. Lt. stood between us so I did not see his face. Custard says he instinctively raised his hand to shield himself and "an ashy paleness overspread his face as when a cloud passes over the sun."

As we came from the brush found the boys taking a horse from the woman at whose house they were about eating. She cursing . . . the men & wishing she had a revolver to blow brains out &c. In the affair she dropped

from under her clothing a man's calico shirt, & what seemed to be some bushwhacking uniform coat, gaily trimmed. . . .

Clogston and Houston were in blue & butternut in advance, & one man they found in the wood committed himself as a guerrilla before the command came in sight to show his mistake. Arrested him. Took supper in [Wellington], men being apportioned to various houses. As we were lying down heard firing, & should have known the prisoner was "attempting to escape. . . ." Heard his cries as the first bullets struck him.

Friday 2d Oct 1863
In the morning was startled by the outcries of the sister of the dead man as she found his body lying where the bullet left it. Took breakfast as we did supper. The stores in town cleaned out. Officers permitting.

Oct 4th
Cloudy & quite cool. Marched about sunrise. Came soon on trail & followed to the camp in which the guerrillas had probably most of them gathered. A dog was heard barking before reaching camp & was found at the feet of a man hung. . . . His trousers had been taken and he left hanging in his hat, blouse, shirt & boots. . . . On his back a paper written. "This man was hung last evening in revenge for the death of Ab Haller. He says his name is Thomas, and that he belongs to the Kansas 9th." Buried him in the ravine near where he hung. There seems to be something of the deathlike brooding over these camps. Always hidden where hardly more than a horse track points the road, in heavy timber, & creek bottoms, offal lying about, cooking utensils, cast off clothing . . . the very air seems thick with the clime with which so lately they seethed. A woman's shoe here, a child's cradle used as a feedbox there, how strangely out of place. . . . Quantrill has evidently gathered his bands and left, maybe for Kan. maybe for the South. . . .

9.

A MOST FEARFUL SIGHT

ALTHOUGH MUCH OF the terrible carnage was centered in the north, no section of the long state line escaped the horrors of war. On the night of August 21, 1863, while most of the border guard was off chasing Quantrill, a band of bushwhackers dashed up the Marais des Cygnes valley into Kansas. "Eight families they successfully plundered . . . ," reported a young woman from Blooming Grove, "taking everything of value they could get their hands on . . . including combs, of which I suppose they are greatly in need of, from the looks of their long, bushy hair."

Farther south small groups of guerrillas remained active on both sides of the line and swept up and down the waters of the Little Osage, Marmaton, and Drywood. Because it was a sparsely populated region to begin with, the devastation of war was felt perhaps even more sharply in the south than in the north. Earlier in the year, a score of partisans under "Pony" Hill and Bill Marchbanks had surprised a squad of Unionist militia at Nevada City. "The Federals scattered," said Marchbanks, "some got in a brick hotel, and part of them started north." The bushwhacker continues:

> I left part of my men to guard those at the hotel, and I kept on with the remainder, and . . . overhauled them. One took shelter in a house; "Pony" Hill and Oliver Birch killed him. I ran one in a lane, the north end of which was closed. As soon as he saw he was trapped he commenced using his revolver on me, and shot five times. . . . I shot twice at him; the last shot took effect in his neck and felled him to the ground. During this time the Feds. in the hotel forced their way out and escaped.

Furious at the brazen attack upon their men, especially since it had occurred in a town already considered the "bushwhackers' capital," Federal forces swiftly moved in. "This damned rebel den shall be destroyed—get your things out in twenty minutes," cried the soldiers as, torches in hand, they ran through the streets. Good to their vow, the Federals soon completed their work. In the words of a chronicler:

> Alas, for Nevada City! In one short hour had she been smitten and desolated by the hot and heavy hand of war. The bright little town of the prairie had become an expanse of glowing coals, of scorched and shriveled . . . foliage, of affrighted and weeping women and children. The smoke of her burning was seen far and wide to the terror of all spectators. . . . In all about seventy-five houses . . . were burned. The court house, the county building, the stores, the best dwelling houses, all were destroyed.

Like Balltown, Montevallo, Carthage, and other communities along the southern border, Nevada City had ceased to exist.

One week before the destruction of Nevada City, guerrillas under Thomas Livingston surprised a foraging party of black and white Federals at Sherwood, Missouri. Of the sixteen Yankees slain, many were executed after surrender. Said a member of the Union relief column that arrived the following day: "The rebels were not content with shooting them in the head—one and all were stabbed to the heart, some of them three or four times. Most of them had their heads beaten to a jelly with clubs."

A few days later, in a bid to free some of his own men captured earlier, Livingston sent a message to Col. Andrew Williams:

> Honored sir, I hev five of your solgers prisoners. Three Whight and Two Black Men. The Whight Men I propose Exchanging with you if you hev eny of my Men Or Eny uther confedorate solgers to exchange For them. as for the Negrows I cannot Recognise Them as solgers and in conciquence I will hev To hold Them as contrabands of Ware. if My proposels sootes your you will Return My Men or uther confedorate solgers and I will sent your ameadately.

When the attempted exchange failed, both sides began killing their prisoners. Additionally, Col. Williams ordered the countryside around Sherwood laid waste for a radius of five miles.

Even though bushwhackers were troublesome and the devastation was widespread, those to the south could only look on in awe at the wholesale butchery to the north and quietly count their blessings. "This is further south than Quantrill's range," wrote one grateful Unionist from Fort Scott on October 5, 1863, "and there are no leaders like him in the vicinity."

The following day, Lt. James Pond and roughly one hundred black and white Federal soldiers were standing around the cooking fire at Fort Blair preparing for lunch. Established in the far southeastern corner of Kansas at Baxter Springs earlier in the year, Fort Blair was situated to guard wagon trains traveling the long, guerrilla-infested Ft. Scott–Ft. Gibson military road. Fifty yards or so to the north of the dining area stood the crude, half-completed earthworks of the fort. As the hungry men took up their meals and prepared to eat, the last thing on their minds this sunny autumn day was the thing that was about to happen. Unbeknownst to the soldiers, several hundred bushwhackers led by William Quantrill were

slipping silently through the Spring River woods, and lead units of this force now had the camp surrounded. Post surgeon W. H. Warner describes what then occurred:

> At 12m., the enemy . . . suddenly advanced upon us at double-quick and opened fire. . . . Riding at full gallop, they passed on the south between the men at dinner and the camp, discharging their revolvers right and left as they advanced. . . . The colored soldiers and the cavalry seizing their carbines and revolvers and the infantry their muskets, all commenced a return fire. . . . While this attack was being made, the main body of the enemy galloped from the woods skirting Spring River on the east, forming in line sixty or eighty rods north of camp, on the ridge, apparently with the purpose of making a charge upon us in full force. . . .

In his tent three hundred feet from the camp, Lt. Pond found himself momentarily cut off:

> I ran out, and before I could reach the company I was shot at, I should think, about one hundred times, but arrived safe at the Fort. . . . I found the rebs as thick as my own men, some of them cutting horses loose and others shooting. My men soon brought their guns to bear upon them and they thought it safer to be a little further off. I called for men to help man the howitzer, but as the firing was so hot none would go over the entrenchments with me. This made me a little mad, and I jumped over myself, and let them shoot at me until I broke open a box of shell with an axe and loaded and fired . . . three times by myself, without swabbing or thumbing; and having no rammer, I was obliged to use an axe-helve. My first shot give them hell, and made them fall back over the hill, killing one horse and man.

Returning to Dr. Warner:

> For twenty or thirty minutes there was a ceaseless rattle of musketry and revolvers and booming of the cannon. After the first dash, the enemy on the west retreated, scattered and fought from behind the shelter of trees. . . . One of the enemy, apparently an officer, had a duel with [our] saddler . . . until the latter having emptied his revolver, rushed from behind his oak tree to his tent after his carbine, which, on his return to his barricade, he brought to his shoulder . . . when his adversary, casting his eyes around and discovering himself to be alone, exclaimed, "Where in hell are my men," and galloped away unscathed. . . . A teamster perceiving an old acquaintance among the . . . enemy, tossed his revolver toward him in token of surrender, and was immediately shot . . . through the abdomen and died in thirty minutes. [A] colored man who was killed while within our works and comparatively out of danger, discovering his former master on the hill across the creek, ran to meet him with joyous acclamation, and was, by his old master, shot through the heart, his body rolling down the hillside in the clear waters of the brook. . . .

At the expiration of half an hour [the guerrillas] withdrew, unaccountably to us, one by one, from the fight. . . .

All was now quiet and still like a calm after a furious storm. . . . We did not know who our enemy was, nor why he had so suddenly left us, but we fully expected him to return.

The reason for the bushwhackers' abrupt departure lay just over the ridge to the north. By a fantastic coincidence, Maj. Gen. James Blunt and a small Federal column had arrived at Baxter Springs almost at the same time as the guerrillas. Unaware of the fighting that was taking place just over the rise, Blunt and his train—eight wagons, a brass band, nearly one hundred soldiers acting as escort, plus several civilians in buggies—had halted momentarily for stragglers to join up before continuing as one to Fort Blair. According to Blunt:

After the escort had closed up, and while waiting a few moments for the wagons, my attention was called to a body of men in line (about 100) advancing from the timber of Spring River, which was some 500 yards on our left. When within 300 yards, they halted; and they being all dressed in Federal uniform, I supposed them at first to be Lieutenant Pond's cavalry . . . on drill. . . . My first suspicion of their being an enemy was aroused by seeing several men, supposed to be officers, riding hurriedly up and down their line, and apparent confusion among the men. I directed the escort to be brought into line facing them, while I advanced toward their line to satisfy myself as to the character of the force. I had proceeded but 50 or 75 yards when they commenced an irregular firing, and at the same time I heard a brisk firing of musketry in Lieutenant Pond's camp, under the hill. Being no longer in doubt that they were rebels, I turned toward my escort to give the command to fire. . . .

Benjamin S. Henning, a major on Blunt's staff, continues:

At this time the distance between the two lines was not 200 yards, and the enemy advancing at a walk, firing. I had just time to notice these facts, when I saw 2 men in the center of Company A, Fourteenth Kansas, turn to run, but before they could fairly turn round, Major [Henry Z.] Curtis and the officers of the company forced them back, and I concluded the fight would be desperate, and was hopeful; but before the officers could get their places the same 2 men and about 8 more turned and ignominiously fled, which the enemy perceiving, the charge was ordered, and the whole line advanced with a shout, at which the remainder of Company A broke, and despite the efforts of [the officers], could not be rallied. At this time a full volley was fired by Company I, Third Wisconsin Cavalry, which so staggered the right of the enemy that I began to have hopes again; but as their left continued to advance their right rallied. . . . The firing then became indiscriminate, and I saw that Company I stood firing their revolvers until the enemy were

within 20 feet, and then turned, but before any distance could be made the enemy were in their midst. . . .

Suddenly, an additional force of two hundred rebels burst from the woods and charged. Terror-stricken, the Federals, commanding general included, fled over the prairie pell-mell, the screaming guerrillas shooting them down with every bound. Once again, Maj. Henning:

> At this time my attention was attracted to my own danger, the enemy having advanced so fast as to cut me off from the rest, and, after trying a couple of dodges, I succeeded in getting into camp at Baxter Springs, all the while closely pursued. . . . [I] found Lieutenant Pond . . . busily engaged in firing a mounted howitzer outside of his breastworks. . . . The bullets were pelting against the logs nearby and all around him.

Anxious over the fate of his comrades, when the firing finally tapered off, Henning and a squad of men crept from the fort. In the major's words:

> I returned to the brow of the hill in the direction of the attack, and plainly saw the enemy engaged in sacking the wagons, and while there saw the band brutally murdered. At the time of the attack the band-wagon, containing 14 members of the brigade band, James O'Neal, special artist for Frank Leslie's pictorial newspaper, one young lad twelve years old . . . and the driver, had undertaken to escape. . . . [They] made about half a mile, when one of the wheels . . . ran off, and the wagon stopped on the brow of the hill in plain sight of where I stood. As the direction of the wagon was different from that in which most of the troops fled, it had not attracted such speedy attention, and the enemy had just got to it as I returned, giving me an opportunity to see every member of the band, Mr. O'Neal, the boy, and the driver shot, and their bodies thrown in or under the wagon and it fired. . . .

After looting and burning the wagon train, the guerrillas re-formed and resumed their march south. Behind, Maj. Henning cautiously approached the bandwagon to look for survivors:

> When we went to them, all were more or less burned and (the wagon) almost entirely consumed. The drummer-boy . . . was shot and thrown under the wagon, and when the fire reached his clothes it must have brought returned consciousness, as he had crawled a distance of 30 yards, marking the course by bits of burning clothes and scorched grass, and was found dead with all his clothes burned off except the portion between his back and the ground. . . . A number of the bodies were brutally mutilated and indecently treated. . . . Other dead . . . were scattered and strewn over the ground for over a mile or two, most with balls through their heads, showing that they were killed after having surrendered, which the testimony of the wounded corroborates. They were told, in every instance, that if they would surrender and deliver up their arms they should be treated as prisoners of war, and upon doing so were immediately shot down. Sergt. Jack Splane . . . was

> treated in this way, and the fiend that shot him, after taking his arms, said, "Tell old God that the last man you saw on earth was Quantrill." Sergeant Splane is . . . alive, although he received five balls, one in his head, one through his chest, one through his bowels, and the others in his leg and arm. Private Jesse Smith was shot nearly as bad and under the same circumstances, but he did not lose his consciousness, and says that the rebel who shot him, and as he lay upon his face, jumped upon his back and essayed to dance, uttering the most vile imprecations. Some unarmed citizens that were with us were killed, and their bodies stripped of clothing.

Although General Blunt managed to escape by the swiftness of his steed, most of his men were not so fortunate. "The graves were being dug and the dead being carried in for burial as I arrived," wrote Lt. Col. Charles Blair, head of the relief column. "It was a fearful sight; some 85 bodies, nearly all shot through the head, most of them shot from five to seven times each, horribly mangled, charred and blackened by fire."

Around the fort itself, additional dead and wounded were discovered. When the woods were searched further, however, something more was found. Well aware of James Blunt's role in hoisting the black flag above the border and his refusal to take prisoners, a messenger had tacked a note to a tree:

> Hello, Jim Blunt! do you recollect the letter you wrote to Col. Parker, last Spring, and the execution of Jas. Vaughn? Stop and turn your eyes to Lawrence and Baxter Springs, and see what your amiable policy has brought you to—see what you have done for your fellow soldiers—and then remember the dying words of James Vaughn.

With Quantrill's departure from Kansas for the winter camps of Texas, the bloodiest, most ferocious year of the war came to an abrupt end. Although the respite was sorely welcomed among terrorized Unionists, few doubted that the coming spring would witness new waves of violence along the western border. It was a fear well founded.

10.

WITH A HEAVY HEART

Although the guerrilla war dominated day-to-day existence and was by far the single most dramatic and absorbing aspect of every man, woman, and child's waking experience, life along the border was not all blood and fire, smoke and death. Even amid the terrible maelstrom of 1863, a surprising spark of normalcy struggled to survive. Even as the grim cleanup of Lawrence progressed, even as the tragic exodus caused by Order No. 11 continued, even as the graves at Baxter Springs were being dug, even then, the Kansas State Fair at Leavenworth went on as planned. Highlight of the week-long event was the Ladies' Equestrian Exhibition. A reporter for the Leavenworth *Daily Conservative* was on hand:

> The Fair Grounds, yesterday morning, were very gay, blooming like a beautiful garden, with the pleasant faces and garments of the ladies. The attendance was much larger than on the previous days, as the managers, with commendable prudence, had reserved the best things to the last. . . .
>
> Three prizes were awarded. The first was a very handsome side saddle, tastily worked, and mounted with silver, and a very elegant silver mounted riding whip.
>
> The second prize was also a handsome side saddle, and the third an elegant silver mounted ladies' riding whip.

Although Mary Jennison, wife of the famous Jayhawker, was acknowledged the best rider, first prize went to overall champion, Mollie Tanner. Continues the *Conservative*:

> Miss Tanner rode a splendid roan horse, which she managed with amazonian skill and daring. Her . . . dashing appearance was the theme of admiration with all observers. Miss T. sits a horse as a Centaur, controlling the animal without apparent effort, and while riding with what to the timid seems the utmost recklessness sits in the saddle as gracefully as in a parlor chair. She wore a neat, black riding habit, and a piquant little hat, well set off by a white feather.

As at any agricultural fair, a large array of crops and produce grown locally were displayed. In addition to all the usual crops raised, the state's farmers, still experimenting with the soil and climate, cultivated hemp, tobacco, and peanuts as well. Earlier in the year the first "Cotton Convention" in Kansas history was held in Lawrence. Despite skeptics, one farmer on the Wakarusa raised two hundred pounds of the staple, while another man set the crowd buzzing when he entered the meeting wearing clothes made from cotton grown, ginned, and spun on his own farm.

Despite the inherent and well-publicized danger, circuses also continued to work the state line, giving daily performances at the larger towns. Even while death and destruction swirled all around, "Mabie's Grand Menagerie and Moral Exhibition" braved the vicissitudes of the border and set up its tents in St. Joseph, Kansas City, Leavenworth, and even Lawrence. Lesser troupes of "Jugglers & Wire Walkers" also provided distraction along the line, as did the rare and exotic. "Colonel Cantwell," the Western counterpart of Gen. Tom Thumb, entertained audiences in Kansas towns large and small. Standing just forty inches from the ground and weighing a mere thirty-two pounds, the "little prodigy" sang, danced, and performed magic while his full-scale partner, a ventriloquist, kept crowds laughing as they stared intently at his wax dummies, one a black man, the other a white:

BLACK: I'se a gentleman soger, and you're nothing but a secesh. I belongs to the 14th regiment of Kansas Volunteers, and you belongs to the guerrilla band. . . .

WHITE: You are my slave, and I will take you (fight and scuffle).

BLACK: I'se a gentleman soger; belongs to the 14th regiment of Kansas Volunteers, and you're nothing but a copperhead; and it's no harm to kill a snake, no time, if he does crawl on two legs like a man.

"Artemus Ward," the world-famous Down East humorist, came to Lawrence, a town in sore need of a respite, and kept audiences "in one continual roar of laughter."

In Kansas City, St. Joseph, Leavenworth, and the larger towns, concerts and theater seemed impervious to the ebb and flow of war and remained steady fare throughout. At Leavenworth, the Union Theater, perhaps the best house between St. Louis and Sacramento, played host to some of the biggest names in America, including Shakespearean performances by John Wilkes Booth. "We never witnessed a more thrilling representation of deceit, hate, revenge and ambition . . . than in his 'Richard,'" reported the Leavenworth *Daily Times*, December 24, 1863.

As a rule, audiences in the West lacked the deportment of those in the East and, as a local editor disgustedly pointed out, "civilized gorillas" often made nights miserable for Leavenworth theatergoers:

> We refer . . . to many, perhaps a majority of those who occupy the back seats at the theater.—They annoy and disgust respectable people with their ribald jests, coarse jokes and idiotic chuckles, during the most affecting parts of the play, of which they have no more understanding than a Patagonian of Hebrew. They go, simply because they have twenty-five cents, and because the theater is a good place to kill time, disgusting sensible people by their conduct. There is no help for it . . . but we hope, should a new theater be built, there will be a pit or gallery for the accommodation of these savages.

While patrons endured the theater, rougher sorts sought earthier amusements. Indeed, turbulent and violent in the best of times, with the added uncertainties of war, the frontier soon sank into a trough of sin and debauchery. The people of Leavenworth "are so wild and degraded that they do not desire the gospel," noted one frustrated preacher in 1858. "It appears that all the lovers of strife, and wars, and bloodshed, of all states emigrated here to this territory, or else they became so since they are here."

Added another man of the cloth from Topeka: "Outside of my church & of the others formed here, I do not know of *one* young man who is not addicted to gaming, profanity, intemperance or incestuousness, in some cases to two, three, or *all* of these vices."

What was true before the war was doubly so during the war. With thousands of soldiers, teamsters, steamboat sailors, Mexican traders, reservation Indians, fugitive slaves, thieves, outlaws, and rogues of all description suddenly swelling the population, the larger towns along the border were transformed almost overnight into "a perfect pandemonium of vice and immorality." Wrote one Eastern reporter after visiting Leavenworth: "You can find all the vices and some of the virtues of civilization here. It is, to use an expressive term, one of the fastest towns in the United States."

"Home of the Brave," "Pike's Peak," and "Poor Jake's," to name but a few, were some of the "almost numberless" saloons and "gambling hells" that catered to Leavenworth, with over sixty such establishments on one street alone. In the same city, scores of "sporting women," working out of brothels like the "Green House," "Fort Warren," and "The Shades," boldly plied their trade. One such "den of infamy," wrote an outraged minister, stood "right in front of the Methodist Church."

Upriver, a similar situation existed, as acknowledged by the St. Joseph *Morning Herald*:

> Never in the history of St. Joseph . . . have we been cursed with so great a number of loose women as at present. At night they may be seen emerging from their dens, to walk the streets and make night hideous with hooting, yelling and cursing. Entering the saloons, their loud and fierce demands for liquor may be heard at the distance of several squares. After swilling them-

selves with beer, gin and rot-gut whisky, they are out again, and with cigars in their mouths, swagger about on the public thoroughfares until midnight.

Coinciding with the outbreak of war, the sudden spread of intemperance was noted by more than one observer. Shootings, stabbings, fistfights, and riots, most of which could be laid at the door of alcohol, became on the streets of the border almost too common for notice. There were more ludicrous displays as well, as when a drunk, prone on a muddy street in Leavenworth, drew a large crowd while he hugged and kissed and affectionately called "my wife" a hog that was wallowing nearby.

Incidents such as the above gave rise to temperance movements, memberships of which were heavily tilted toward women. One group, reported a newspaper correspondent, decided to attack the evil head on:

> A saloon keeper of Mound City, returned from Leavenworth with a new supply of "choice liquors," and having invited some of his "best customers" to aid in unloading the cargo, was "treating the crowd" by way of compensation, *when nine able bodied women of the immediate neighborhood appeared, each shouldering an axe*, and marched in "singular file" into the groggery. One of them, the leader, and the daughter of one of our most distinguished citizens, mounted the counter, and swinging her axe to and fro with destructive force, soon demolished the last receptacle of the "critter" within the building. The newly arrived barrels were "stove in" and their contents left to organize themselves into miniature rivers of "Bust Head. . . ." The ladies then proceeded to the Mound City Hotel . . . but after thoroughly searching the premises returned without encountering the *aqua vitae* to the amount of even a solitary "snifter."

Although well-intentioned, gestures such as these were largely symbolic, and so long as there were soldiers at large, reformers fought a losing battle. There were occasions, however, when overindulgence indirectly aided the Union war effort. "[I had] entered upon a dissolute and reckless life . . . and associated with gamblers, drunkards, and bad characters generally," wrote former Jayhawker William F. Cody, recalling his sordid stay in Leavenworth. "I continued my dissipation about two months and was becoming a very 'hard case.'" But then, a short time later, "Doc" Jennison's old regiment, the Seventh Kansas, returned briefly to Leavenworth. Cody continues:

> Among them I met quite a number of my old comrades and neighbors, who tried to induce me to enlist and go south with them. I had no idea of doing anything of the kind; but one day, after having been under the influence of bad whisky, I awoke to find myself a soldier in the Seventh Kansas. I did not remember how or when I had enlisted, but I saw I was in for it, and that it would not do for me to endeavor to back out.

After 1861, crime in the cities and towns of the western border became pandemic. Pimps, pickpockets, confidence men, burglars, and thieves of all shades found the lawless spirit spawned by war much to their liking. "An honest man, engaged in some honest business, could . . . do well at Fort Scott," commented a visitor to the town; "he would at least have no competition." As much might have been said about almost any town in Kansas.

The countryside fared no better. Organized gangs of horse thieves threatened to sweep the border clean of livestock. Whether they were called "Union Leagues" in Kansas, "White Rags" in Missouri, or "Red Legs" on both sides of the line, the approach was usually the same: single out a quiet, politically indifferent farmer, accuse him of disloyalty, then despoil him of his wealth. With a good horse going for hundreds of dollars on the black market, the rewards were great. Earlier in the war, at the height of patriotic fervor, men such as Marshall Cleveland and Charles Jennison had grown rich on the trade. By 1863, however, this "old dodge" had run its race, and if the rewards yet remained high, the penalties were higher still. With the almost total breakdown of due process, "vigilance committees" swiftly and unstintingly took matters into their own hands.

One such incident, replayed dozens of times in Kansas, occurred near Manhattan. Reported a local newspaper:

> A citizens' court . . . having secured the person of one Scranton, a notorious horse thief, dispensed with red tape, and proceeded to give him a trial.—He was found guilty, and sentenced to be hung at 10 o'clock. . . . He begged so piteously for one hour longer that it was granted. . . . At 11 o'clock exactly a party of 200 citizens repaired to a tree a short distance from town, and sent him to a place where the wicked cease to trouble.

A similar affair took place at Wathena when John J. Bennett was seized by "a dozen responsible citizens" and accused of horse theft. According to the St. Joseph *Morning Herald*:

> [Bennett] attempted an escape, when he was fired upon, several shots taking effect in his arms, hips and legs. A rope was immediately placed about his neck, and he was swung up to the limb of a tree. After being choked for a few minutes he was let down. . . . He was then again hoisted to the tree, and kept suspended until life became extinct.

Even with determined "Regulators" on their trail, however, horse thieves in Kansas had become so brazen that confrontations were unpredictable, as Martha Van Sickle of Xenia learned to her everlasting sorrow:

> Dear Father and Mother
> It's with a heavy heart that I take my pen in hand to communicate to you a loss that can never be restored in this world. It is my dear John. He was shot

and killed . . . by a thief that he went to help arrest. He was shot with a load of buckshot 2 of which struck him in the neck. One shot passed through his windpipe and the other one went between his windpipe and the jugular vein. Both of the shot lodged between his shoulders. He lived but a few minutes and spoke only about five words after he was shot. The 1st Lieut. of his company when he was in the service was shot by the same man while he was stooped over John trying to help him. Lieut. Ford is not dead yet . . . but there is not much hopes of his recovery. There was another man shot the same day by the same thief. . . . A company of soldiers arrived and I don't suppose [the thief] lived one minute. He was shot all to pieces. From 20 to 30 balls passed through his body. There has been a great many thieves arrested and 3 or 4 killed in the last week and the country is full of them yet. . . . Every man goes armed day and night and are trying to get some soldiers stationed there for a while. . . . There will be a great many more lives lost before our Country is peaceable again. I hardly know what to do at present.

In much the same style as guerrillas, some robbers banded together and boldly raided and sacked Kansas villages, two of which, Osawkee and Monticello, were all but cleaned out. "The people are becoming desperate," wailed one Kansas editor, "exposed as they are to horse thieves on the one hand, and bushwhackers, on the other."

Even though the methods of one gang in northwest Missouri were more sophisticated, the results of their activity were the same. In the words of a Federal officer, Col. John F. Williams:

When I took command in St. Joseph . . . there were refugees in the city from several counties . . . having been ordered to leave the State by a band calling themselves "Midnight Rangers." Their mode of operations was about this: They would leave a written notice, three or four matches enclosed in it, at a party's house, notifying him that if he did not leave in five days, with his whole family, he would be hanged and his house burned. Then some other members of the gang, who were on friendly terms with the victim, would call and condole with him, and advise him to stay. But the victim had already made up his mind to go, which they knew, and they would take advantage of his fear and buy his property at nominal figures. Thus a system of wholesale robbery was carried on.

Few, it seemed, were immune to the rampant crime and immorality, and young soldiers were especially prone. Those upright individuals who entered camp clinging to their Christian values soon found themselves assailed on all sides. Lamented one Yankee trooper from Lexington:

If what is practiced in this regiment is good soldiering then I can never get to be a good soldier. Getting drunk, stealing, shirking duty, rioting, and imposing upon the few who (like me) are steady, is the prevailing discipline(?) in this regiment. It is a perfect hell to me.

Farther down the line, a lonely comrade stationed at Coldwater Grove gave vent to similar concerns:

> It makes me feel sory to see the wickedness that is going on in camp. To see so many young boys going into all kinds of wickedness that they can posibly get into such as playing cards cursing & drinking whisky. It appears as though they try to see how much of it they can get at. It looks like as though it would be impossible for God to smile on us with pleasure and bless our cause with success. . . .

In all the larger towns—and in many of the smaller—rowdy soldiers, drunk and violent, invaded the saloons and bordellos of the border seeking respite from the nerve-grinding guerrilla war. To many civilians, their would-be protectors seemed more a curse than a cure. "Peaceable citizens are insulted and beaten every night, while going to their homes . . . ," raged the editor of the St. Joseph *Morning Herald*. "There is a provost-guard appointed to arrest soldiers on the street . . . but this guard spends its time in bawdy-house carnivals, and in treating themselves by force in beer houses and drinking saloons."

When a company of Kansas troops paused in Paola before resuming their trek south, the stay more resembled a bushwhacker raid than a visit by U.S. soldiers. According to a local editor:

> Their conduct was disgraceful in the extreme—they were drunken, ruffianly and brutal.—They beat citizens over the heads with revolvers whenever they happened to see one and were near enough to strike. They . . . presented revolvers at the breasts of several of our merchants, fired off their pistols on the streets and in the saloons, insulted grossly an old lady in one of the stores, and, in fact, did every mean act their brutal and ruffianly natures suggested. The captain either could not or would not, or at least did not, control them or attempt to do so—in fact, he indulged largely in the indiscriminate abuse. . . . God save us from another visit. . . .

For more serious crimes, however, military justice was often swift and sure, as a white officer of the First Kansas Colored Regiment makes clear:

> The most painful part of a soldier's duty, we had to perform yesterday, that was the shooting of three of our own men on dress parade, for committing one of the most damnable crimes known to civilization. On the night of the 29th of April, Sergeant Holt Holten, Corporal Alex Mayho, and Private Robert Catter, of Company D, repaired to the house of one Mrs. Lee, whose husband was a secesh prisoner in the guard house at Fort Lincoln. . . . They forcibly entered the house about two o'clock in the morning, and by violence and threats they succeeded in ravishing Mrs. Lee and her daughter, a young girl of sixteen. . . . The women both identified the men who confessed to having committed the deed.—The men were immediately put in irons . . . [and] a Court Martial was ordered. They were tried and convicted

upon their own confessions. It was one of the most outrageous cases of the kind I ever read of. I had to sign their death warrant . . . and I can tell you it was the most painful task I ever had to perform. I know they deserved it, but no man who has ever had to do such [a] thing can have any idea of the feelings of a man who is about to sign a paper that will send three souls into eternity in a few hours. The court was convened at 10, a.m.; the verdict rendered about 1, p.m., sentence pronounced about 3, p.m., and the men shot at 6 1/2, p.m., all the same day.

Although capital crimes committed by soldiers in Kansas were usually followed swiftly by punishment, in occupied Missouri it was another matter. There, in the war zone, the worst passions of the Federals frequently found vent, and total immunity from justice was often the understood, if unspoken, "law." Wrote one distraught Yankee colonel from Warsaw:

Since Saturday morning last there has been as many as four murders committed by our soldiery. . . . which . . . makes the number six within the last ten or twelve days.

There is a feeling of insecurity universally prevailing with the peaceable citizens in towns and country, and all in this place that can get conveyance express an intention of leaving. . . . There is no discipline whatever exercised over the soldiers here, which, added to the indiscriminate sale of liquor, renders the soldiers fiends rather than soldiers. . . .

As was the case at Warsaw, after years of violence and bloodshed, the war's brutalizing effect on civilian and soldier alike soon began to tell. "Men are shot or hung every few days on the most trivial of pretexts," wrote one border resident. "It has become so common that it excites no remark."

In cities, the scandalous acceptance of cruelty and death could be seen at every turn. Dead cattle, horses, mules—even humans—might fester under the broiling sun for days on the streets and levees of St. Joseph, Leavenworth, and Kansas City before some exasperated individual would roll the bodies into the river or cover them over with a little sand. On the battlefields of the border, the numbing effect of war was even more pronounced. Wrote a witness after one bloody encounter:

What shocked me was the calloused indifference the men displayed toward their late comrades in putting them under the ground. Trenches had been opened in the . . . soil to a depth of not more than two feet, and about six and a half feet in width. Into these the bodies were tossed with about the same consideration that sacks of potatoes would have received, and when one layer had been completed another was placed on top of the first, and then . . . the clay and gravel was shoveled on and the job was complete. We saw many feet protruding from the ground, where there had not been enough earth put on to cover them. . . . In a hazel thicket . . . I found a man lying flat on his back,

his arms extended their full length on either side. In one [hand] was clenched a lot of parched corn and the other was gnawing convulsively into the ground. A shell had torn away a part of his abdomen, and his bowels were protruding. At these wild hogs were chewing. I drove them away and shouted for the guards, who came and bore the dying man away. He had . . . lain in this condition not less than eighteen hours, although the hogs had evidently just found him.

In the midst of the terrifying guerrilla war and the omnipresent crime, women without men struggled to survive. Whether they were widows living in towns or wives on isolated farms, a sense of helplessness and despair gripped all as danger lurked around every corner. Longing for her man, one sad woman wrote from southern Kansas:

I am so lonesome since John is gone that some times I think I will go crazy. I don't know what I would do if it was not for my sweet Babe. She is nine months old just beginning to walk and talk a little but she is a great deal of Company for me. Times are very hard here. There is not goods of any kind . . . anywhere nearer than 30 or 40 miles of here. There is considerable sickness in the country. Everything that is had is here. Even a person can't keep a horse that is worth keeping. Horse thieves is here by the dozen. I intend as soon as John gets out of the service . . . to Skedadle.

The terrible uncertainty and isolation thus expressed were echoed by thousands of other women along the border. In occupied Missouri, however, the feeling was magnified fourfold. Already despoiled and driven from her home by Jayhawkers, at Westport a tearful Margaret Hays put pen to paper:

The children and I are all well at this time but Oh, Mother I have thought I have had my share of trouble but my trouble has just began. The evening of my birthday I received news of my husband's death. It had been published in the papers but I do not believe it as they have him dead so often. But yet dear mother, I fear it is so. I have a little hope that it may be someone of the same name. The report has come in letters and by men we have always taken to be reliable men. One man said he helped to bury him. Then I have heard it disputed. Another report says he was wounded dangerously. His brothers have given up all hope, but I still cling to the hope it is not so. . . . His lot has been a hard one. For the last year and a half he has been driven from his home, all that he had labored for for years taken from him, his family turned out of doors without a shelter to the mercys of the people, he not being allowed to see them much less to help them. When I saw him last, last summer, it was with the greatest secrecy, and the children were not allowed to see him at all for fear they would tell it.

During the next three weeks Margaret continued to "cling to hope." As a final letter to her mother revealed, however, that hope soon faded forever:

On the tenth of September he went to where some of his friends were on picket and begged them to come home and bring me a letter. He was so anxious to hear from me and the children. He wanted me to come to him if I could get a pass; that was impossible. It was but a few days after he wrote the letter, that they had a skirmish and my husband was shot through the head. . . . Mother, somtimes I think I cannot stand it. All that I asked for was his life. Our property is all taken from us and I am left without a home with four little children to take care of. I cared not for all this; I did not care whether I had the second dress if his life could only be spared. . . . What will become of us God only knows.

As a conquered people, Missourians had few rights Federal soldiers were bound to respect, and a woman alone never knew when even that last "right" would be stripped from her:

We dared not murmur; they invaded my house and terrified us, even throwing their loaded guns across my baby's cradle. . . .

These marauders almost forced themselves upon us as boarders. A young lady dared not refuse to take a ride with officers, and one lovely girl died three days afterwards with a dread secret untold.

Writing from Miami, Elvira Scott vividly depicts the cataclysmic social upheaval taking place in Missouri and the terror that came with it:

About three o'clock [p.m.] a procession appeared. It was headed by eleven six-mule teams drawing wagons filled with Negro women & children. Behind them was a large procession of two hundred & forty Negro men, besides women & children. Some were playing the fiddle. The procession of Negroes had an escort of soldiers carrying a flag. The Negroes swarmed over town in search of houses. Every unoccupied house was soon filled, besides some kitchens of occupied houses. Immediately they began pillaging gardens, chicken coops, & peach trees were stripped. Mrs. Brown had three hundred hills of sweet potatoes; every potato was taken, also cabbages & chickens. When she remonstrated she was told that they were sent here to tear up the secesh root & branch & that they were going to do it; if she did not wish to starve she would have to leave. Mrs. Ruxton's Negroes had a very fine garden for their winter's support—they were treated the same way. . . .

There was such a general slaughter of hogs that I went to hunt mine. . . . I tallied them up, all but one, & put them in the pen.

After seeing her teenage daughter, "Pet," safely aboard a downstream packet, Elvira raced home once more to protect her property:

Not an hour after Pet left a hundred soldiers . . . came to town. The Negroes sent up a shout when they came. At night I felt afraid & locked up the house; went to the Seminary to stay all night. At the gate I passed through a crowd of Negroes playing the fiddle & dancing about the street as though they were possessed.

After we were undressed & the light was blown out we stood looking out the Hall windows until midnight. The Negroes were thronging the yard, talking, singing, swearing. In the houses around they were cooking, preaching, praying, & dancing. White men were occasionally seen among them, a dirty, barbarous lot.

Between midnight & day I was roused by a terrible running & knocking & general excitement. Went to the window to see what was up. . . . I called to them. They replied that they were after hogs. I discovered a large black hog, snorting & running for life, & they after it with sticks, clubs, & axes. They killed two in the yard.

I came home early in the morning, sick for want of rest.

With the social fabric of their world turned inside out, beset by thieves from within and warring factions without, it was the haunting, uncertain future that was perhaps even more terrifying to Elvira and thousands of others along the border than the present grim reality.

On a snowy eve of "the coldest day I ever remember," Willard Mendenhall of Lexington paused a moment to reflect in his diary on the year just ended and the one just ahead:

December 31, 1863

Many sad changes have taken place since this time last year. God only knows whare we will be this day one year to come. This cruel war has made desolate many a once happy home. I have bin thinking of those poor creatures that was drove from thare homes in Jackson and the border counties last fall. They was not allowed to take provisions with them, that in many cases females had raised with thare individual labour, what will those poor creatures do this winter. How can Gen Ewing sleep in his comfortable bed a night like this without thinking of those destitute women and innocent children. We are as likely to be drove from our homes before another year roles arround.

11.

RIDER ON A PALE HORSE

The terror engendered in Kansas by the bloody summer of 1863 assumed panic proportions the following year. That the coming spring, 1864, would witness a resumption of the guerrilla war, few doubted; that it would take a miracle to save the state from the awful consequences if it did, seemed certain to all. In spite of a doubling of the border guard, in spite of strong garrisons in many towns throughout the state, in spite of a large and thoroughly aroused militia, in spite of the new telegraph that linked the major cities, in spite of it all, the general feeling in Kansas was "it can be done again"; that after his successes of 1863, William Quantrill crossed and recrossed the state line when and where he pleased. No community in Kansas escaped the terror of 1864, and in the ensuing panic that swept the state, all reason was cast to the wind.

Hardly had the new year begun when the great trial commenced. On a frosty night in February, the entire village of Lecompton turned out half-dressed when the preacher's son and five other young pranksters, "shouting like bushwhackers and yelling like fiends," surrounded the town and fired off their guns. Most of the boys were soon caught and fined and sent to bed, although some of their elders, whose pounding hearts had been given a sore test, argued for a much more severe punishment.

Later, when a fire broke out in a hotel at Wyandotte one dark morning and several imprudent men tried to rouse the town by shooting off their weapons, the result was a "stampede" by the terror-stricken populace in the opposite direction. Wrote the Reverend R. D. Parker from the same city:

> Like my neighbors, I have slept with arms by my side, and beneath my pillows, and have taken my turn in standing guard nights. I have been repeatedly called out to defend the town from threatened attacks, sometimes at the midnight hour. Once the danger signal . . . struck upon my church bell, and the terror of the people, especially of the blacks, brought vividly to mind the massacre at Lawrence. Like most of our people, we have kept a few

Julia Lovejoy
Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka

articles of indispensable wearing apparel packed ready for a hasty flight, and in my absence, my sermons, as combustible, and of chief value, have slept out of doors.

Over one hundred miles west, Sam Wood warned Federal authorities that the isolated residents of Council Grove, with every approaching dust cloud, expected a horde of screaming raiders to come swooping down the Santa Fe Road. "Excuse [my] nervousness," apologized the normally sound Wood. "I slept none last night."

"Let none dwell in fancied security because we are so far from the border," cautioned the editor of the Topeka *State Record*, speaking for all "western" Kansas. "The murderous wretches composing the guerrilla bands are desperate and reckless in the extreme, and do not fully count the chances of escape."

During the height of the panic, even the most innocuous occurrence suddenly took on sinister significance. When anxious Unionists in St. Joseph awoke one morning to find the outsides of their homes marked with a white "X," terror gripped the town over an expected guerrilla raid and their being branded for death. A semblance of calm returned when it

was later learned that a newsboy, unsure of his route, had chalked the houses of subscribers.

As always, those trapped on remote farms suffered most. "*All alone and all alone!*" Thus opened Julia Lovejoy in a letter to her family, May 10, 1864, while around her home near Baldwin City, the dreaded spring began:

> Lonely and weary, with continual watching . . . I seat myself to talk with those I love far, far away. O the days and nights, I number o'er, on the borders of this extensive forest with none (save those too young to understand or sympathize with me) for society . . . and to add to my sorrow, we are looking every hour for "Quantrill," with his horde of fiends, to sweep through this entire region, and murder indiscriminately and burn every house, in his march of death! We are told he is VERY NEAR us and about to make another raid . . . and he says "he will make clean work this time. . . ." I lay awake nights and think every hour he may issue from the woods. "Our nigger" has a "six shooter," every barrel loaded to sell his life as dearly as possible, for he well knows no mercy will be shown him. I had him learn me how to fire it and I surely shall if I am not shot before I can seize it, if they begin their murderous work here. Sometimes I think I will flee to another State. . . . Our next door neighbor has just passed and says "a dispatch" came to Lawrence, last night, that Quantrill was not far from Olathe . . . and may be here before tomorrow night.

Like Julia's well-meaning neighbor, when rumor-prone idlers allowed their fears free rein, the effect on others could be, and often was, devastating. Writing to the Leavenworth *Daily Times*, and drawing upon a lurid imagination, one man declared that from a few hundred bushwhackers, Quantrill's band had suddenly swelled to a legion of over two thousand bloodthirsty killers:

> With his force divided into parties of three or four hundred each he can lay all western Kansas in ruins, kill every man, woman and child on his route, and steal every horse. Then suppose they concentrate and take the route to Santa Fe or Idaho, where they could get all the forage, provisions and money they wanted; for at least five hundred miles, how many of the crew could we overtake or hurt? Let those who followed him from Lawrence, answer. We have telegraph lines now to assist in conveying news. These we had not last summer, and they may be useful in conveying the intelligence that we have been killed, but of no value to bring troops in time to save our lives after Quantrill comes.

Although this writer had, as he stated, "no desire to create any undue excitement," he, like countless others, in fact did.

Even normally sane voices let fly words that could only fuel the hysteria. "In almost every county of [Missouri]," said T. Dwight Thacher of the Kansas City *Journal of Commerce*, "there are from twenty to two and

three hundred guerrillas, of themselves enough, if concentrated, to make an army of ten thousand. . . ."

No town in Kansas could more easily envision the horror of ten thousand merciless bushwhackers running loose in the state than Lawrence. In the few short months since the massacre, the city had become a veritable fortress, protected by cannons, troops, militiamen, scouts, blockhouses, entrenchments, and, perhaps most important, the telegraph. But still, and in spite of its being one of the most thoroughly defended points in the West, the terror that lurked in Lawrence had abated little, if any, since the famous raid.

"Our people seem diseased with fear," noted Hovey Lowman in the revived *State Journal*. The editor continues:

> Such great crimes . . . seldom repeat themselves. Civilization don't crimson its pages with such an awful deformity but rarely. We trust in God it may never happen again. To guard against it, we must watch without ceasing. Eternal vigilance alone is our protection. Everyman's house must be an armory. . . . If the enemy comes . . . he must stay there and defend it. It is better to die shooting the enemy than to be shot without such an attempt.

Lowman's advice was faithfully followed. "Every house *is* an arsenal," reported a visitor to the town, "and many of them could be defended against fifty bushwhackers."

"I neither carried or owned any arms before," added an erstwhile pacifist, the Reverend Richard Cordley, "but now I keep a Colt's Navy on my study table and thirty rounds of cartridges in the drawer with my sermon paper."

And yet, in spite of their best efforts and the almost miraculous transformation of their town into a citadel, the panics that shattered other Kansas communities in 1864 hit the residents of Lawrence especially hard. "Last night we had a scare," wrote a tension-filled Molly Brown to her daughter, describing one such incident. Extra cannon and men were rushed in to reinforce the town, the blockhouses were "doubly guarded," and, she continued, the ferry was ordered to moor on the south shore to preclude a surprise from the north. Molly goes on:

> We do not get the reason for the alarm yet. We heard last night a large body of Rebels crossed at Platte City [Missouri] but their destination was unknown. Our citizens are to be wakened every morning at 4 by a cannon & call them to drill. They must go armed to their business prepared for an attack at any hour.

Many people, Molly admitted, went to bed each night fully clad for flight.

Trepidation over bushwhacker raids and Quantrill's whereabouts was not limited to Lawrence or the western border. From Indianapolis, Indi-

ana, to the high plains of Nebraska, from the streets of Chicago to the desert Southwest, the now legendary leader was seemingly everywhere. "Can it be possible that Quantrill is near the mouth of Des Moines River, within a few miles of Keokuk?" asked an incredulous Union general.

Ironically, Quantrill found himself most feared when he should have been feared least. Fulfilling his ambition of making the Kansas border "as desolate as that of Missouri," the twenty-six-year-old partisan soon lost interest in the struggle, and for all practical purposes he remained a harmless, if haunting, bystander of the border war.

William Quantrill had stepped from the stage, but others, including his former lieutenants George Todd, Bill Anderson, and Dick Yager, had not. By May 1864, these three and hundreds more had made the migration up from Texas and reentered their western Missouri redoubts. The guerrillas wasted little time in renewing operations, and within days the border was ablaze with unparalleled ferocity. Wailed editor T. Dwight Thacher: "The very air seems charged with blood and death. East of us, west of us, north of us, south of us, comes the same harrowing story. Pandemonium itself seems to have broken loose, and robbery, murder and rapine, and death run riot over the country."

During the long, bloody summer of 1864, the once lovely Missouri countryside became little more than a vast killing ground where garrisoned towns remained, for all practical purposes, but tiny islands of Unionism washed by a sea of revolt. Continues Thacher:

> It is about time the authorities [in Washington] . . . should understand that the rebellion exists in Missouri, as actively, as virulently and as uncompromisingly as in Virginia. . . . [The people] do not recognize Missouri as a loyal State, and consider themselves citizens of the Southern Confederacy. Call it what you may, infatuation, ignorance or anything else . . . [western Missouri is] just as fully rebel as any part of Tennessee or Arkansas. . . .
>
> What is the condition of the truly loyal people of the border counties of Missouri . . . ? Simply one of siege. Outside of the military posts and their immediate vicinity, no one of *known and open loyalty* can safely live for a moment. The loyal people are collected in the scattered towns and military posts, while to all intents and purposes, the rebels hold possession of the country. No loyal man can till a farm or raise a crop. No loyal man can safely travel upon the highways. If he ventures to run the gauntlet from post to post, he does it at the risk, the imminent risk, of assassination. . . . In a word, the rebels hold the country, while the loyal people are besieged in the towns. . . . How long the towns can live in a virtual condition of siege, is a question not very difficult to answer.

Given the existing conditions in Missouri, the Federal response was predictable. "Let the people *feel* the war," prodded one desk general to his

subordinates in the field. Unnecessary as they may have been, orders such as these were obeyed promptly, precisely, and, in most cases, with pleasure. Missourians in the middle had suffered terribly during the first years of rebellion. Nothing, however, approached what 1864 would bring, and to some it must have seemed as though the very vitals of their state were about to be ripped out and strewn over the land. Whole communities were violently uprooted and their dazed inhabitants scattered to the wind. Nightly, the Missouri horizon, north, east, south, and west, was aglow as homes, barns, and crops of known or suspected Secessionists went up in flames. By day, men were snatched off the streets and hurled into the dark prison cells of St. Louis and Jefferson City and never heard from again. Uncounted more were roused from sleep at night, dragged from their homes by Unionist death squads, and murdered before the eyes of their horrified families.

Imprisoning, beating, torturing, and killing them outright were not the only means of making Missourians "feel the war." In areas where guerrillas tore up railroads, bridges, and telegraph lines, prominent Southern citizens were often herded into "press gangs" to repair the damage. Assessments were another way to punish Missourians. When partisans captured a steamer at Rocheport and killed a man on board, Department of the Missouri commander Maj. Gen. William S. Rosecrans came down hard on the hamlet. General Orders, No. 159:

> The general commanding, satisfied that the citizens of the town of Rocheport . . . have countenanced, tolerated, and fed, if not encouraged, gangs of bushwhackers and other outlaws, for the last six weeks, and being apprised that a gang of these villains in open daylight shot and murdered Thomas Waterman, the only support of a widowed mother and two sisters, on the steamboat . . . at the landing of said town, orders that the sum of $10,000 be collected from the disloyal citizens of Rocheport . . . for the use of the widow and sisters of said Waterman.

When the crushing fines failed to halt partisan activity in the area, Federal troops moved in and Rocheport was "accidentally" burned to the ground.

To punish helpless and disarmed civilians was not, however, to punish well-armed and determined guerrillas. Unabated, the rebel fury continued. Eventually the roads, rivers, and rails of Missouri ceased to be conduits of commerce and communication, and normal intercourse between the towns and villages thinned to a trickle. Without large military escorts, mail and stage lines simply stopped running. As at Rocheport, steamboats on the Missouri were subject to rifle fire from the shore at almost any moment, and in spite of armor-plated pilot houses and a thousand-dollar bounty, some rivermen refused to guide their craft on a single perilous trip from St. Louis to Leavenworth.

Desperately, the hard-pressed Federals fought to break the rebel grip on Missouri. To do so, various stratagems were devised. One new method of dealing with the elusive guerrilla was the use of smaller, swifter patrols. Another tactic was the permanent posting of "foot scouts" to hold country crossroads and fords. Yet another way of meeting the bushwhacker on equal terms was the creation of elite anti-partisan units, dressed, mounted, and armed as their adversary. Additionally, because guerrillas now wore Union blue more often than not, Federal commanders were compelled to adopt a complex series of hand signals, bugle calls, and colored hat ribbons to avoid deadly encounters. For every Federal move, however, the rebels had a countermove. On June 12, near Kingsville, Missouri, a company of blue-clad bushwhackers, wearing the correct colored ribbon for the day, approached to within pistol range and virtually annihilated an unwary Union patrol.

An unidentified partisan describes another incident, this time at a place called Manassas Gap:

> The most of our men were in the edge of the brush on the east side of the road. South of the cut—on the opposite side, was an open field. . . . From where the pickets stood they discovered a company of Federal soldiers coming. One of the pickets concealed himself and counted 62 men. Another picket came in and reported the number. Our orders were to wait until they had gotten opposite the open field and then to charge on them so as to get advantage of the open ground in which to do our fighting. The Federal commander had discovered the pickets, which purposely showed themselves in order to get the Federals to follow them to the open ground, which they did. As soon as our commander saw that they were in the open field, he ordered the charge. At it we went, whooping like wild Indians. As soon as the Federal commander heard us, he stopped the pursuit of the pickets and turned his men to meet us. Such a fight I have never seen as that was. . . . In less than a minute [both sides] were fighting on one acre of land. The smoke and the dust raised by the horses soon got so thick that it was almost impossible to distinguish friend from foe, and men had to be careful to identify the man that he was shooting at for fear it would be one of his own men.
>
> None of our men had less than two, and some of them three and four Colts six-shooters . . . while the Federals only had one, with carbine and saber. There was such a rearing and plunging of horses that carbines were useless. They soon emptied their pistols, and of course had not time to reload. Some of them undertook to use their sabers, but it is well known among veteran cavalrymen that a saber is not a good weapon with which to face a man with a loaded six-shooter that knows how to use it. We soon discovered their pistols were empty, and then got just as close to them as possible and used our own pistols to the best advantage. I saw [a] man draw his saber and start for me. I waited until he got nearly close enough to hit me with it, then I aimed a shot at his body. The shot must have struck a

vital part for the saber immediately dropped from his hand. As quick as I possibly could, I fired two more shots. When I fired the last shot my pistol was not three feet from his body. His horse went on past me and the rider did not fall from him until he had gotten 15 or 20 paces beyond. . . .

There was not a command given after the first one, or, if given, was not heard or heeded. Every man on both sides knew that it was a fight to the death. . . . At the first rush, Dick Yager rode straight at Captain Wagner. They had a hand to hand fight of it. Wagner shot half of Yager's mustache off in the melee, but fell from his horse, shot through the body. After the Federals had emptied their only pistol and discovered that Captain Wagner had been killed, they seemed to realize that they were at our mercy and they broke and commenced running in every direction, followed by one, two and sometimes three of our men. . . . After it was over we were astonished to find that we had only one man killed, one severely and one slightly wounded. We gathered up all the arms that we could find, taking those of the killed. We also found that we had killed 16 of their men, including the captain.

Although much of western Missouri south of the river had been swept of guerrilla sympathizers by Order No. 11, the counties north of the Missouri had not. The frustration of a typical scout through the rugged Platte country is evident in a report by Maj. Robert H. Hunt:

We started, taking a circuitous route of some 8 miles to gain 2, so that the inhabitants should not know where we were going. We marched altogether through the brush, principally in single file. We crossed the Platte River and halted, throwing out pickets, hoping to entrap somebody. At 2 o'clock in the morning we started to the point where we learned the rebels were encamped. Captain [William J.] Fitzgerald . . . conducted us through the most intricate paths, avoiding roads. At every crossroad we found the most unmistakable signs of their sentinels, who fled at our approach. Seven miles from Weston, at the house of a man named Fulton, our advance espied a mounted guerrilla, but he got away. We saw the old man, who denied having any knowledge of bushwhackers. He was ordered to proceed with us in order to show us the camp but he stubbornly refused, whereupon he was handled pretty roughly. At [that] moment a daughter of Fulton made her appearance, and aimed a revolver at Sergeant [Ed] Gill and David Causort, our scout; the latter, however, disarmed the fair damsel; he also took from her a bowie-knife and flask of powder. . . . We took the old man, the commanding officer promising the family to save his life. . . .

When within 5 miles of Weston we stopped and took breakfast. . . . The aforesaid old man was taken out by some of the men and hung a little . . . but the boys knowing the promise of the commanding officer let him go, where he is now doubtless feeding his friends. . . .

After breakfast we went out into the Weston road at the blacksmith's shop, where Private [Thomas] Bailey was taken by 3 or 4 guerrillas and killed. . . . one day last week. We searched for his body, but could not find

it. When we came to the shop the smith . . . was absent, but we sent for him. In the interim we conversed with his amiable wife, who said her husband had done no work for several weeks, adding that he had no coal. We went into the shop and found fire on the forge and that work had been done there only a few hours before. . . . The husband arrived, but he knew nothing of the murder of Bailey; did not know that he shod the horses of bushwhackers. . . . We then returned to Weston . . . and from thence home. We saw but one rebel family in the whole country, according to them.

Even south of the Missouri, although most of the residents were gone, the other ally of the guerrilla, terrain, remained. Revealed a newspaper correspondent July 6 from Warrensburg:

Let anyone who wonders at the failures we make in finding bushwhackers, accompany a scouting party through the fastness of Jackson or Lafayette County; let him see for himself the dense forests, impenetrable thickets, impassable gullies and insurmountable bluffs and cliffs . . . and the wonder will then be that we ever catch *any* guerrillas. . . .

On the rare occasions when fortune favored the Federals, the victory was often hollow. Well aware that capture meant death, most partisans had long since taken the precaution of strapping themselves into the saddle. Although this tactic almost always ensured that bushwhackers would not fall into Federal hands when wounded, it did not always ensure survival, as this successful ambush led by Capt. Charles Coleman illustrates:

One of the men killed was strapped to his horse, and was shot through and through, the horse dashing backward and forward, through the brush, from one squad of our men to the other, its sides receiving a shot at every turn. Finally, he stopped, and our men approached, to find the rider gasping in the agonies of death. . . .

When guerrillas were surprised and cornered, their foe could usually expect a fight to the finish. After a brief but bloody skirmish near Fort Scott, all the rebels "scampered off," wrote Col. Charles Blair, "except one." "[He] dismounted, got behind a tree, and deliberately went to work emptying two revolvers and firing several shots with his carbine, wounding 2 of our men, shooting 1 through the breast and 1 through the thigh. Our men shot him fifteen times before he fell."

Nevertheless, live bushwhackers did occasionally fall into Federal hands. After a furious gun battle and overnight siege at Deepwater, Missouri, two partisans and a wounded comrade were coaxed from a barricaded house. Capt. Joseph H. Little continues from there:

On being brought to camp they were placed under strict guard; food was given them, of which the leader partook almost voraciously: the other fellow . . . was sullen and refused to eat. . . . At 10 a.m. . . . I had them exe-

> cuted. They were allowed to write to their friends . . . and were allowed to send their money and trinkets to their friends also. . . . They refused to give any useful information; said . . . that they were not afraid to die. . . . They calmly walked to the grave, looked contemptuously on the detail assembled, said they were ready, quietly folded their arms, kneeled down, and met death with a dauntlessness worthy a better cause. The wounded man, who . . . had received a number of buckshot in his body, I have sent to Clinton to be operated upon. . . . I think he will die. He is one of the most desperate men I have ever seen. He positively refuses to give any information; scowls on those who come near him. He ought to have been executed at once, but humanity revolts at the thought of executing anyone so horribly mutilated as he is at present; but, if not ordered to the contrary, I shall execute him if he recovers.

For many, simply killing a foe was not enough. By the summer of 1864 the irregular war had degenerated into a savage head hunt in which both sides committed beastly atrocities. Some found sport in merely slashing a wounded enemy's throat. Others adorned saddles and bridles with scalps. Many went a step further and collected ears, noses, and other body parts and strung them like necklaces. Ghoulish games were played as well. Severed heads of the fallen were stuck on mileage markers or telegraph poles as a grisly omen to others. The fate of five Federals near Independence was revealed by their commander, Col. William R. Penick:

> They were all wounded, and killed afterwards in the most horrible manner fiends could devise. All were shot in the head, and several of their faces were terribly cut to pieces with boot heels. Powder was exploded in one man's ear, and both ears cut off close to the head. Whether this inhuman act was committed while he was alive or not, I have no means of knowing.

In early July 1864, several companies of Missouri militiamen in the Platte region—known derisively as "Paw Paws" because of their dubious loyalty—suddenly revolted against Federal authority. To aid the rebellion, Fletcher Taylor led a company of guerrillas into Parkville. At his home in the town, Union militiaman Capt. Thomas Wilson had only moments before arisen from bed. According to Wilson:

> Just before sitting down to breakfast, myself and wife saw quite a body of men, dressed principally in Federal uniform, coming down Main street, in the direction of my house. When nearly opposite the house, my wife cried out, "My God! they are bushwhackers!" I stood still until they had passed, and then got my revolver and ammunition and started for the quarters where our men were. My wife, who was in the door watching them, told me not to try to get to quarters, that they had them surrounded, and were firing on the company.

Although Wilson wisely slipped away and the Parkville militia soon surrendered and were paroled, others were not so fortunate. Wilson continues:

During the firing, George C. Mitchell, who lives in one corner of the house where the company was stationed, fired two rounds and on turning indoors to get another gun he was fired at, three buckshot taking effect in the small of his back. At the same time, his wife was shot in the left breast. Both wounds are serious. . . .

Among the other outrages committed . . . was the murder of Isaac Brink . . . who was at home on furlough. His wife was lying at the point of death, and he had come into town to get ice for her, when he was stopped by young Sewel and another man. Sewel asked Brink for his belt. Brink replied that he had a revolver, and wished to know what would be his fate if he gave it up. Sewel replied, "You shall be respected." He then took Brink's revolver with his left hand, pulled it out of the scabbard with his right, and shot him in the left cheek. Seeing that he was not dead, the other demon shot him through the heart, took his horse, and left him lying there until the hogs had eaten off one of his ears. . . .

After the shooting was over, the guerrillas commenced plundering the stores and citizens.

Farther north, Confederate recruiter Col. Calhoun Thornton took charge of a large band of Paw Paws, then struck for Camden Point. Rebel flags sprouted magically from plantation windows as Thornton marched along, while gray uniforms materialized at roadside cabin doors.

To crush the revolt, several Union regiments took the field, including the Second Colorado under James H. Ford and the Fifteenth Kansas led by Charles Jennison. Taken together they were, in the words of a Missouri chronicler, "the worst body of cut-throats and freebooters that ever tortured a victim or looted a community."

From Weston, the Federals moved on Camden Point. Relates a member of the expedition, Lt. James Childs:

When about two miles from that place, the advance guard . . . were fired upon by guerrilla pickets, who then fled, closely followed by our men who chased them through the brush into the town, firing as they went, and succeeded in killing six guerrillas, while on the run. After passing about a mile beyond the town they met the main force of the enemy, under command of Thornton, numbering about 140 men, drawn up in line of battle, but without halting, the . . . Colorado boys gave a wild yell, dashed right toward the center of the line which immediately gave way, and after firing a few shots, killing one of the attacking party and wounding another, they fled in wild confusion, with their pursuers close in their rear, and seven of them killed before they escaped. Having pursued some three or four miles our men rejoined their command. . . . [Thornton] had made Camden Point his headquarters, had all his munitions of war there, and was conscripting the able-bodied citizens throughout that section. A few hours previous to the attack he made a speech, returning thanks for a flag that had been presented to him, and which was captured by our forces, in which he stated that it was

folly for the Federals to think of attacking him; that he had captured Camden Point and would hold it; that he would fight in every by road and hog path in the country. His speech was scarcely ended before the avengers were upon him, and his band in full flight from the town.

After murdering the captives, the Federals turned back to deal with Camden Point. Again, Lt. Childs:

A short time after entering the town a man named McCormack rode into our lines and being recognized as a bushwhacker was immediately arrested. He did not know that Thornton had been driven out, imagined all was right, and tried to pass himself off as one of Jennison's men. . . . McCormack was marched into camp and . . . [we] "disposed of him. . . ." One Olvis, formerly of the militia, who had joined the guerrillas at Platte City, was captured, having his leg broken. He recognized one of his captors and called him by name, and received in reply "Olvis, you are in damned bad company." One of the party then held him up, and another placed his carbine close to the prisoner's head, fired, and the soul of Olvis was in the presence of his Maker. . . .

Once in possession of the town, a sad scene of pillage and destruction commenced, such as we hope never again to witness. Several of the citizens were arrested and taken to headquarters. Houses were burned and pillaged, and the heavens for miles around were lighted up with the flames. . . . The bodies of two of the dead guerrillas were cast into the flames and also consumed. . . . Late into the night the fires continued and again in the morning were renewed. About two-thirds of the town was destroyed. . . .

The fine residence of Dr. Thomas, living at the edge of town, was a smoldering heap of ashes, as we passed in the morning, and it was reported that the Doctor had been taken out and shot. He was an old man, bore a good character, but it was reported that he had visited a sick guerrilla, hence his fate. . . . Other citizens in the neighborhood no doubt shared the same fate.

After burning nearby Platte City to the ground, Jennison's command swept south toward Parkville, looting, burning, and murdering as it went. Although they carried death lists, no civilian in the Jayhawkers' path was safe, as Unionist storekeeper J. J. Throckmorton soon discovered. A member of the Federal column describes what happened:

Jennison saw him and walked up to him; he learned that he . . . was a Missourian. As soon as he learned that he drew his pistol and shot Throckmorton dead. . . . Jennison talked in an excited manner as he stood, smoking revolver in hand, over the dead man. He said all Missourians were alike—all disloyal. Waving his weapon he said further that any man who brought him a prisoner while on this expedition would receive from him just what he had given Throckmorton.

The following day Jennison and his command were marching along a road near Parkville. . . . An old man . . . was discovered mending a fence by

the roadside. . . . He was too old to have harmed the Government . . . his beard was long and white. Jennison asked him his name, and made no reply when the old man told him. . . . Jennison drew his revolver and shot him dead in his tracks.

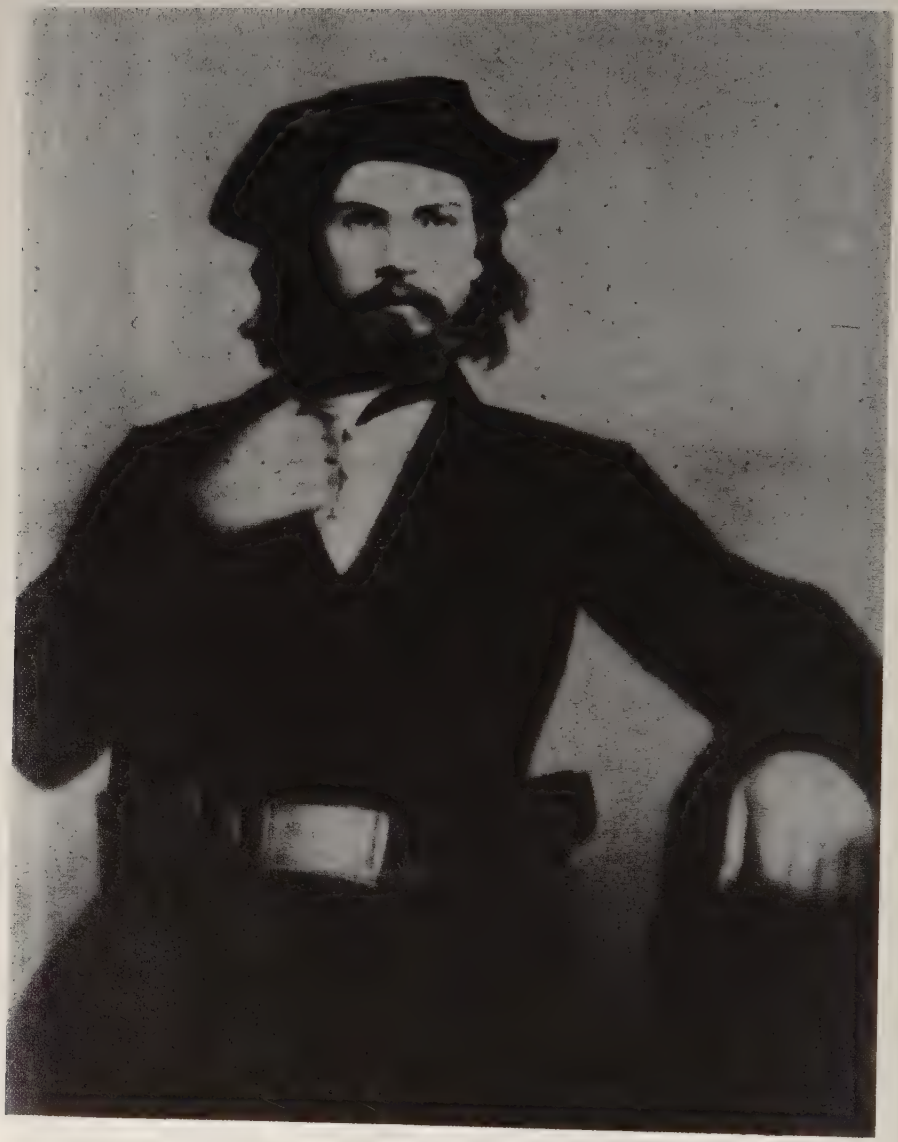
Even as a terrible judgment was falling across northwest Missouri, an even worse fate befell the center of the state. Due in part to Order No. 11 and the concentration of Federal troops along the Kansas line, many guerrillas drifted out of the border country to operate from the interior of the state. Although central Missouri, like the rest of the state, had suffered terribly from three years of fierce irregular warfare, few in that section were prepared for the horror of 1864. A correspondent for the St. Louis *Democrat* reported earlier that spring on what was to become an all too frequent event, this time near Jefferson City:

On last Tuesday night . . . [a] notorious bushwhacking gang . . . went to the house of an industrious, hard-working German farmer named Kuntz . . . and demanded his money. Kuntz had saved some money for the express purpose of sending for his family to come over from the old country to his new home. He stoutly denied having any cash, but the fiends not believing him . . . deliberately took down a wood saw, which was hanging up in the cabin, and *cut his left leg three times* below and four times *above the knee, with the saw*. Loss of blood, pain and agony, made the poor fellow insensible, and he was unable to tell where the money was concealed. His mangled body was found next day, life extinct. . . . After leaving Kuntz's the gang went to an adjoining American farmer . . . and not succeeding in their demands for money, they destroyed everything in and about the place, took the man out, and *literally* cut his head off.

No individual more embodied the horror that swept central Missouri than Bill Anderson. Tasting mass murder first at Lawrence, then at Baxter Springs, Anderson became so adept at slaughtering Unionists that eventually, in his words, he grew "sick of killing them." Like Frank and Jesse James, George Todd, and the other partisans who rode with him, the twenty-five-year-old bushwhacker had ample cause to kill, as he revealed in a letter to a Lexington newspaper on July 7, 1864:

I lived in Kansas when this war commenced. Because I would not fight the people of Missouri, my native State, the Yankees sought my life, but failed to get me. [They] revenged themselves by murdering my father, destroying all my property, and have since that time murdered one of my sisters and kept the other two in jail twelve months. But I have fully glutted my vengeance. I have killed many. I am a guerrilla. . . .

"Like the rider of the 'pale horse' in the Book of Revelation," said a stunned observer, "death and hell literally followed in his train." Relentless, remorseless, savage beyond belief, by the summer of 1864 Anderson



Bill Anderson *State Historical Society of Missouri, Columbia*

and his gang had become far and away the most feared bushwhackers in Missouri. Incidents such as the following, reported by the Carrollton *Democrat*, did nothing to diminish that reputation:

> The citizens being apprised of [Anderson's] appearance in the neighborhood, had collected at Capt. J. W. Hudson's preparatory to attacking [him] the first opportunity. Accidentally the guerrillas were discovered while at Mrs.

> Mitchel's, and Capt. Hudson . . . lost no time with eleven of his men in getting to the vicinity of Mrs. M's. Leaving their horses within 100 yards of the house in the field with one man they cautiously crept up to within fifteen or twenty steps of the open entry or passage between the two rooms of the house . . . in which were several of the guerrillas amusing themselves with a violin. At the signal a portion of Capt. H's. company fired at the men in the entry, literally riddling the chairs and other furniture . . . and causing a general stampede for a moment. Some rushed out of the house, among the first was . . . a prisoner, who was shot and killed in the yard (supposed by the bushwhackers). . . . A brisk fire was kept up for a short time, until it was considered best [by the militia] to retire to their horses, some of which having broken loose scattered. . . . At this junction the guerrillas were advancing round the farm in direction of some of the horses, some of which the [militia] failed to recover and [they then] sought safety in the brush; others who got their horses were closely pursued for a half mile or more. Mr. John Kirker was pursued and his horse falling was overtaken by the guerrillas and barbarously and brutally murdered, and his head scalped and severed from his body.

After routing the terror-stricken Unionists, Anderson and his handful of men moved on to Russelville, murdering as they went. Continues the *Democrat*:

> Soon after passing this place they met a young Mr. Oliphant whom they halted and asked him what he was? He said "a union man." They then asked him if he could kill a bushwhacker? He said "he could." They then commenced abusing him and soon had him stripped of his clothes, they then whipped him with switches until he was almost dead, and then made a noose in the middle of the bridle reins that was on his mule and put it around his neck, then took the saddle off and tied it to the mule's tail to frighten it and turned it loose to run, dragging the unfortunate young man by the neck.

As word spread and his reputation grew, dozens of tough farm boys flocked to Anderson's camp. Although the reasons for joining might vary, the aim of all was the same. Wrote one new recruit:

> Having looked the situation over I determined to join the worst devil in the bunch. . . . While [Quantrill] was fierce, he was nothing to compare with that terrible Bill Anderson, so I decided it was Anderson for me as I wanted to see blood flow in revenge for the outrages the jayhawkers had committed.

Not all who came to Bill Anderson were accepted, however, and as the Lexington *Weekly Union* makes clear, standards were strict:

> On one occasion a desperado went to join him. Anderson told him that he "didn't want to have anything to do with him—that he was a coward," etc. The fellow replied, "Try me Captain." Anderson told him "it was no use," but the fellow insisted, until at last Anderson spit in his face when the

fellow knocked him down. Anderson arose, rubbed his temple and said, "Swear him in boys; any man that will knock down Bill Anderson surrounded by his men, will do for a member of our band."

And as his gang grew and the terror spread, raw militiamen, such as those near Carrollton, quickly learned to give Anderson and his savage young killers a wide berth. The reaction of one Unionist company near Laclede was typical. In the words of Lt. Col. D. J. Hynes, who was leading a squad of Federal troopers northward:

I met a party of men who afterward proved to be . . . militia, forty men, under [a] Lieutenant-Colonel, drawn up in line of battle in the open prairie. Upon making my appearance and before I had fully settled upon their identity . . . they broke and fled in the utmost confusion and disorder, leaving their flag, guns, hats, blankets, &c., which fell into our hands. After capturing the flag I ordered a halt and earnestly endeavored to get communication with any of their various scattered parties through a small party of men sent out for that purpose. One finally became bold enough to meet one man. I . . . only chased them about a mile, but the majority of their men did not stop running until out of my sight, and this without a shot being fired on either side. [The] Lieutenant-Colonel afterward came to me and politely informed me that it was their first time out. . . . He also told me that the flag which my escort captured was his and requested it returned. That I declined, informing him that we had been fighting three years for the honor of that flag, and that we could not consent to return it to the care of a miserable set of cowardly poltroons who would again disgrace it on the approach of danger. Some of their men informed my men that [the] Colonel . . . was himself the first to turn his back upon us.

At the prodding of superiors, officers in the field redoubled their efforts to track down Anderson and his ferocious gang. Although generally unsuccessful, occasionally they struck. A Yankee trooper, W. H. Schrader, tells of one such encounter near Fayette:

Our scouting party got on the trail of the guerrillas late [in] the afternoon . . . but did not succeed in overtaking them. The trail was taken up early next morning, when it soon divided, the rebels separating to get food at different houses.

Of course when this occurred we would have to take one of the most promising trails and follow it. We could not break up our command as they did, for they always had arrangements to come together at some certain point, and if we came up to them in squads we would have been killed in detail. We, therefore as was our custom, followed the most likely trail, when we came to a field in which several negroes were working.

As soon as they saw us they began motioning toward the house, but making no other demonstration. The house was hid from view by a cornfield and an orchard, and a lane led up to it. The command to wheel about

was quietly given as also the order to charge.

We reached the house before the rebels knew of our coming, and being cut off from their horses—there were seven of them, they made a break in two directions, five for a heavy strip of timber south of the house and two west over newly plowed ground for a thicket along a branch. The five were killed before they reached the timber.

It was thought at first that all had started together for the timber, but the Captain of the company to which I belonged, looking to his right saw a man running toward the plowed ground and calling for assistance, I being nearest, turned my horse quickly and followed, shooting first with my gun, of which the rebel dropped his belt containing two revolvers and succeeded in getting into the brush, where his companion had preceded him.

This companion handed him one of his revolvers when he immediately turned and began shooting at me, emptying five chambers of his revolver at a distance of not more than thirty feet. The second or third shot passed through the body of my horse, from the effects of which he died in a few minutes. I fired two or three shots from my revolver, but the horse was staggering and that spoiled my aim.

By now other comrades had come up and both rebels were killed. . . . The fellow I followed had two or three wounds in his body, and I must have given him the first, which caused him to drop his revolvers. . . .

After scalping the victims, the Yankees rounded up the horses and moved off. Schrader concludes:

Leaving the seven dead rebels for the farmer and his neighbors to bury, we proceeded on our hunt for the balance of the gang. We had not been gone long before some of the rebel companions came to the farm and seeing their fate, declared they would have revenge in a day or two. They got their revenge, but not on our regiment.

Several days later, on the morning of September 27, 1864, Anderson and eighty partisans raided the village of Centralia. Soon after looting the hamlet of goods, boots, and liquor, and after waylaying an unwary stagecoach, the bushwackers spied smoke from an approaching locomotive on the North Missouri Railroad. At approximately the same time as the guerrillas saw the train, engineer James Clark saw the guerrillas. In Clark's words:

I was running at the rate of 35 or 40 miles an hour, and about 2 miles east of Centralia I discovered a big crowd of men on horseback. At first I did not pay much attention to them, thinking that they were state troops as it was not unusual . . . to find them any place. . . . [When] about a mile away I remarked to my fireman that I did not like their actions, and that we might strike the wrong gang this time. They fell in line on the south side of the track about one hundred yards below the station. I glanced ahead and saw several men piling wood on the track to throw the train into the ditch.

I told my fireman to look out for himself. I pulled the throttle wide open and dropped down on the deck. By this time I was in front of them, and they opened fire on us with a perfect shower of bullets into the engine and train. . . .

The guerrillas being on the south side of the track and the depot on the [north], the brakeman did not see them until they opened fire on the train. The brakeman rushed into the cars and set all the brakes tight which brought the train to a stop in front of the depot.

The throttle was wide open, slipping her wheels, spinning on the engine; there was a shower of bullets. I saw they had me foiled, so I raised up and shut the throttle and then dropped on the deck again. In three or four seconds I saw half a dozen revolvers pointed at me and my fireman, demanding money, watches, valuables, etc. My fireman was shot in the breast but it was only a flesh wound and did not amount to much. . . . [He] asked them for God's sake not to kill us.

Meanwhile, pandemonium had erupted in the cars as over one hundred passengers screamed, cried, and begged for mercy. Wrote one terrified man on board:

As soon as the train stopped, Anderson walked to the platform and ordered the passengers to march out. . . . [He] was dressed in a Federal soldier's coat, black pants, and cavalry hat. He ordered the citizens—men, women and children—to march in one direction where they were formed in lines two deep, and those dressed in soldiers' clothes were marched in an opposite direction. In getting off the platform [one citizen] hung back. . . . [He was] shot by Anderson and tumbled off between the cars. This had the effect of causing a stampede of passengers who rushed off the cars in great confusion. . . . The passengers were then robbed of their watches, jewelry and money. One young man was on his way to St. Joseph with his mother. He slipped a hundred dollars in greenbacks into his boot-leg, and on demand handed over the balance. A guerrilla asked him if he had secreted any money and he denied that he had. He was told that he would be searched, and if any funds were found on him he would be killed. He then acknowledged that he had secreted one hundred dollars in his boot, which was drawn off by the guerrilla, the money obtained, and the young man shot dead. A gold watch was found in the boot of a German, and he was instantly killed. . . .

There were twenty four soldiers aboard the train. . . . Some were . . . returning home on furlough, and some discharged. One was wounded in the leg, and hobbled on crutches. All the soldiers were formed into line, and Anderson walked up to them, and thus addressed them:

"You Federals have just killed six of my soldiers, scalped them, and left them on the prairie. . . . I will show you that I can kill men with as much skill and rapidity as anybody. From this time forward I ask no quarters and give none. Every Federal soldier on whom I put my fingers shall die like a dog. If I get into your clutches I expect death. You are all to be killed and

Thomas Morton Goodman
Betty Pierce Collection

sent to hell. That is the way every damn soldier shall be served who falls into my hands."

Some of the soldiers remonstrated, and declared that they were just from Sherman's army, and had nothing whatever to do with killing and scalping his men. Anderson replied: "I treat you all as one. You are Federals, and Federals scalped my men, and carry their scalps at their saddle-bows." A line of bushwhackers with revolvers were then drawn up before the soldiers, who cried and begged for their lives, but every man was shot. All fell but one, who was shot through the shoulder. He dashed through the guerrillas, ran through the line of citizens, chased and fired at by the fiends, crawled under the cars, and from thence under the depot building. The building was fired, and he was soon forced to come out. He emerged from the smoke and flame, and with a club knocked down two of Anderson's men before they killed him. He fell pierced with twenty bullets.

Elsewhere around Centralia it was a scene of terror and stunned disbelief. Recalled one witness:

Women and children cowered behind boxes or in the stores, crying, moaning and wringing their hands. The men stood around like statues, numb with horror and fearful of what might happen next. The guerrillas seemed transformed into fiends, half drunken with the whiskey they had stolen. They

gave no heed to anyone, man, woman or child, except to insult or terrorize them. . . . Those who have never seen men unrestrained, can have no idea of how those guerrillas conducted themselves while they had full possession of the little village.

After setting the train on fire and burning another that blundered into the depot, the screaming raiders rode south several miles to a creek where George Todd, John Thrailkill, and more than three hundred guerrillas were camped. Arriving with the bushwhackers was Thomas Morton Goodman. Although his comrades had indeed been slaughtered at the station, Anderson had spared the thirty-three-year-old Federal sergeant in hopes of exchanging him for a recently captured officer of his own. On furlough from Georgia and only moments before bound for home and family in Hawleyville, Iowa, Goodman now found himself surrounded by hundreds of the most ruthless killers in America. Three hours later, while still in camp, it was the captive's lot to witness an event even more horrific than that which occurred in Centralia. Thomas Goodman:

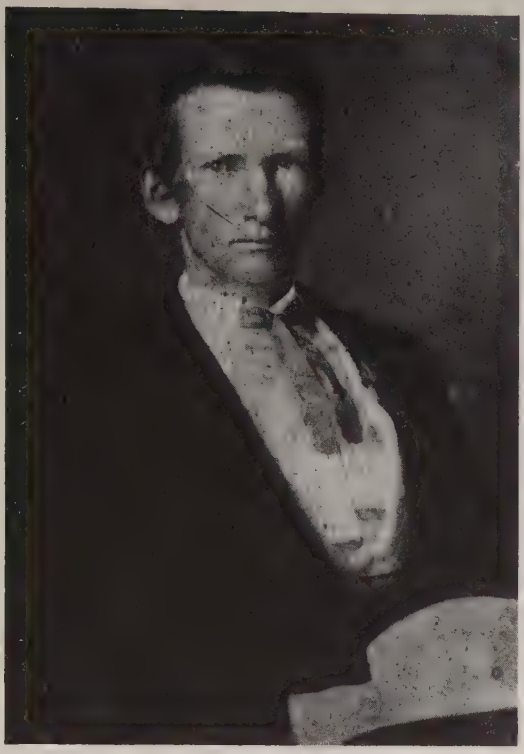
Suddenly, the attention of all was aroused and centered upon the figure of a single horseman, approaching at full speed . . . across the prairie. "Bill! our scout," said one of my guards quietly, as he noticed I too observed the commotion. . . .

The words had scarcely died upon his lips, ere another horseman came bounding through the low brush on our right, and galloped straight to where Anderson stood.

His intelligence . . . seemed of importance, and in a moment the guerrillas scattered in search of their horses, and were seen in all directions mounting and forming into squads of ten or twenty. . . .

I learned . . . that the scouts had brought intelligence of the approach of a federal force . . . of about one hundred and sixty men, under the command of Major [A. V. E.] Johnston. . . . He had been at Centralia shortly after the guerrillas . . . , and leaving twenty-five of his command at this place, was now approaching to give the guerrillas battle.

After riding a circuitous route the guerrillas seemed to have reached the spot where they purposed awaiting the onset of the federal troops. A halt of ten or fifteen minutes took place here, and men were sent out by Anderson to observe the advance of the federals. They soon reported back. They were nearer than the guerrillas thought and had halted about a half-mile beyond and just over the crest of a hill that completely hid them from our view. Detaching Todd and some hundred and twenty-five men, he divided this force; sending Todd with half their number by the left, around the south side of an old field, skirted by brush and scattered timber. The remaining half led by Thrailkill marched by the right. Anderson led the center, and was to do all the fighting; the other force simply acting as a decoy to attract Johnston's attention, and were only to join in the affray, in case Anderson did not succeed in routing the federal line.



Frank James
National Portrait Gallery

As yet we had not obtained a view of the federal forces, and our disposition for attack completed, the guerrillas moved slowly forward to the summit of the hill. My guard and I rode immediately in the rear of Anderson's company. . . .

As we cleared the top of the hill, and passed through a narrow belt of scattered timber, the federal line burst upon our sight.

Recalled Frank James, whose seventeen-year-old brother, Jesse, was also in the rebel line:

The Yankees [had] stopped near the rise of the hill. Both sides were in full view of each other, though nearly a half mile distant. The Yankees dismounted, gave their horses into charge of a detail of men and prepared to fight.

John Koger, a funny fellow in our ranks, watched the Yankees get down from their horses and said: "Why the fools are going to fight us on foot." And then added in seriousness: "God help 'em." We dismounted to tighten the belts on the horses and then at the word of command started on our charge. . . . For a moment we moved slowly. Our line was nearly a quarter of a mile long, theirs much closer together. We were still some 600 yards away, our speed increasing and our ranks closing up. . . .

Returning to Thomas Goodman:

> The cry "charge!" broke shrill and clear from the lips of [Anderson], and with one, long, wild shout, the guerrillas dashed forward at the full run. . . . At the same moment both Todd and Thrailkill, their men yelling like so many fiends, appeared on either flank. . . .
>
> I saw at a glance the battle was already won by the guerrillas, and I was not astonished to witness one volley fired, and too hastily fired, by the federals. . . .

Again, Frank James:

> We were laying low on our horses. . . . Only two of our men were killed, [one being] Frank Shepherd. . . . The blood and brains from Shepherd splashed on my pants leg as he fell from his horse. . . . But we couldn't stop in that terrible charge for anything. Up the hill we went yelling like wild Indians. . . .
>
> Almost in the twinkling of an eye we were on the Yankee line. They seemed terrorized. . . . Some of the Yankees were at "fix bayonets," some were biting off their cartridges, preparing to reload. Yelling, shooting our pistols upon them we went.

"They were surrounded before they could possibly [find] time to reload their emptied pieces," added Goodman, "and the guerrillas were riding around and in their ranks, firing and shouting, 'surrender! surrender!'"

In disbelief, Goodman watched as the Federals threw down their weapons and raised their hands. The captive continues:

> They surrendered. Surrendered as we did at Centralia, with assurances of humane treatment. I *felt* the scene approaching would prove but a counterpart of what I had witnessed at the station, and I shut my eyes to prevent the tears from welling forth . . . as I beheld the guerrillas proceed to disarm, and render defenseless these "prisoners of war." No sooner was this accomplished than Hell was suddenly transferred to earth. . . . No treatment too brutal, no treatment too cruel to satisfy the greed of that hellish crew. . . . Men's heads were severed from their lifeless bodies, exchanged . . . to bodies, labeled with rough and obscene epitaphs [and] inscriptions, stuck upon their carbine points, tied to their saddle bows, or sat grinning at each other from the tops of fence stakes and stumps around the scene. God knows, the sight was too horrible for description. . . .
>
> At the beginning of the battle . . . a detachment of twenty-five of Johnston's men sat holding the horses of the balance of their comrades who formed the line of battle. No sooner had the yells of the flanking party of guerrillas revealed their proximity, than this squad sought safety in flight. It was the work of a moment only for the guerrillas to enter in hot pursuit; from five to ten men chasing one federal soldier, and away over the prairie, as far as the eye could reach, this race for life continued. Such shouting, firing, running and cursing, I suppose was never witnessed before in a battle. . . . I was told by the guerrillas, they did not think more than two of the twenty-five escaped their murderous weapons, and that about one hundred and

twenty men were slain, belonging to Johnston's command. . . . Fairly crazed with their success and the excitement of the battle and slaughter, the guerrillas started in a body for Centralia, to finish . . . their . . . victory in the massacre of the escort left by Johnston at the station. . . . Fortunately some of the soldiers observed them coming, and succeeded in mounting and getting away. Some few, however, were captured and killed. One man having shut himself up in an outhouse, and being well armed, the guerrillas used their usual duplicity in order to get him out. He was assured by everything sacred that he would not be harmed; he was told Maj. Johnston and his comrades were all prisoners, and that if he came out and gave himself up, he should be treated as they had been. . . .

Accepting what they said in good faith, he opened the door, and—was shot dead on the spot . . . !

In a little while it was evident many of the guerrillas were again becoming brutally intoxicated, and in one or two instances difficulties occurred between them and some of the citizens of Centralia, which came near proving fatal to the latter.

In one instance, a man's wife was defending her husband from the accusations of complicity with Johnston . . . when someone offered her some personal indignity. She instantly resented it with a blow, when the inhuman wretches felled her to the ground like a beast of slaughter, and otherwise maltreated her person.

At last the order was given to return, and the drunken cavalcade . . . straggled, without order or discipline, back to their camp.

That evening, as the bushwhackers celebrated the day's victory around their fires, Thomas Goodman found himself in a nightmare without end: "The night was cool. I had neither coat or blanket, and I could not sleep. I lay and watched the silent stars; and watching, and thinking of all that had passed that bloody day, I wept."

Nine more such nights would pass while the captive was led through the woodlands of central Missouri. Seeing his opportunity, however, Goodman slipped away one dark night and eventually reached his wife and children in Iowa, becoming "the first being whose life [Bill Anderson] ever spared, who was caught in federal blue."

Following the massacre at Centralia and the fruitless search for Anderson, Federal soldiers turned savagely on the people living in the region—farms and crops were burned, homes and shops destroyed, and dozens of men were beaten, tortured, or killed. The fate of one civilian living near Huntsville is revealed by the Liberty *Tribune*: "He was hung up, but without killing him, and was then left pinned with bayonets to a tree where he was afterwards found by friends and released. . . ."

"By the grace of God, they shall pay," vowed one high-ranking Union officer. And, by the grace of God, hundreds, innocent and guilty alike, did pay during the bloody summer of '64.

12.

A LAND WITHOUT PITY

Even as the butchery at Centralia was in progress, over one hundred miles to the south an even bloodier event was transpiring. In mid-September 1864, at the head of twelve thousand cavalrymen, Confederate General Sterling Price crossed from Arkansas into Missouri in one final bid to drive the Yankees from his home state. As Price well knew, the odds were long. If he moved swiftly, however, and if the people of Missouri rose en masse, Price's four-year-old dream of liberation might well come to pass. Hardly had the expedition begun, though, when the drive stalled before the Union works at Pilot Knob. Although the Federal force soon retreated, the sanguinary two-day check dulled the Southern fighting edge for good. Thus, rather than continue north to invest St. Louis as planned, Price turned west toward the Kansas border. And as he did, hundreds of guerrillas emerged from the woods to add their support.

While personally outraged at the savage war practiced by the bushwhackers and the ghastly trophies they so proudly displayed, Price nevertheless was determined to use the partisans freely. After conferring with Bill Anderson at Boonville in mid-October, the rebel general sent him and his men raiding east along the North Missouri Railroad. As a result, New Florence and High Hill were looted and leveled, while in nearby Danville five citizens were killed and much of the town was destroyed.

On the night of October 21, Anderson's company reached Glasgow. Only days before, a strong detachment of Price's army had assailed the river port and captured its garrison. When the rebel soldiers and their prisoners finally marched away, the town found itself completely at the guerrillas' mercy.

One of Bill Anderson's first stops upon entering Glasgow was at the mansion of wealthy Unionist, Benjamin Lewis. A correspondent for the St. Louis *Democrat* describes what happened:

> Leaving their horses with an orderly at the gate Anderson and his aide banged at the door of the house and they were let in. . . . Anderson called

for Lewis, and being told he was not in the house, he said if he was not forthcoming he would burn the house down; but that if he would make his appearance, his life should be spared.

Given this assurance, Mrs. Lewis sent for her husband who had been upstairs. When Lewis arrived, Anderson and his fiendish associate were at the table, helping themselves to the food which had been left after the supper, and drinking freely of the liquor which they had brought with them. "Here is an old Union man," said Anderson. Anderson laughed and said, "I have heard of you, and Old Price has heard of you down in Arkansas and Texas. You have been of more damage to our cause than any ten men in the State. . . ."

Mrs. Lewis [was not] allowed to say a word, and Mr. Lewis himself was silenced the moment he attempted to say anything.

The first thing Anderson did was to demand Lewis's money or his life, declaring that he had vast sums hid. Lewis gave him about a thousand dollars in silver and paper, telling him it was all he had. This did not satisfy the incarnate devil. . . . His first act was to knock Lewis down by a blow on the head with his pistol. This was repeated several times, both Anderson and his aide mingling their blows with blasphemous and obscene curses and yells of the most savage kind. Anderson took Lewis and stood him on his head, doubled him up and jumped upon him; and Anderson and the Captain put the muzzles of both their pistols in his mouth at once and crammed them down his throat, choking him terribly, asking him "how he liked that."

This barbarous act was repeated several times. Anderson also made Lewis stand by the wall, and shot at his legs across the room, hitting them, and then asked him tauntingly "if he was shot. . ."

Once Anderson called up some of Lewis' negroes, whom he had emancipated, and asked them, "You have been set free, have you?" The negroes replying that they had been, Anderson said, "Yes, you damned old coon, you have set all your negroes free," and struck him on the head with the muzzle of his pistol. . . . To add to these demoniac outrages, Anderson and the . . . captain took a negro girl of twelve or thirteen years old into another room and both of them ravished her by turns. One torturing Lewis while the other was committing the outrage on the negro girl. . . .

Afterwards he placed his pistol to Mr. Lewis's knee and fired down at his feet, powder burning his legs. This he did twice. He also choked Lewis many times, then taking his knife out, and seizing Lewis by the neck, he felt for the jugular vein, pricking it with his knife and giving an Indian yell, he said: "This old fellow thinks more of his money than his life, and I'll cut his throat."

After this Mr. Lewis left his house, guarded by Anderson, to hunt up all the money in town. He found two ladies who went to work trying to raise money for him. While the money was being hunted up, Anderson laid Lewis on the counter of a store and taking his knife ripped open his shirt collar and slit his vest and pants in pieces. This was about two o'clock in the morning, and Mr. Lewis, who is a man of the strongest constitution, having suffered

for over four hours the most excruciating torture . . . was seized with a chill as he lay on the counter. . . . Anderson told his orderly to pile some chairs on the legs of the old coon to keep them still, which was done.

Finally, Mrs. Thompson, a cousin of Lewis, who had raised all the money there was left in town, it having been previously stripped by Price's army, asked the . . . captain how much money it would take to release Lewis. He replied five thousand dollars. This sum she produced, four thousand being in paper and one thousand in gold. . . . This being done, the assistant of Anderson turned Lewis over to Mrs. Thompson; Anderson remarking as he did so, that he would rather have Lewis' life than his money.

Without knowing, Anderson would indeed have both the victim's money *and* his life. "Covered all over from head to foot" with wounds from the ordeal, Benjamin Lewis would ultimately die in little over a year from complications arising from the torture.

Moving west from Glasgow, Anderson cut a swath of death and destruction through northern Missouri. And as always, wherever the guerrilla leader passed, he left his card. Records one chronicler from Carroll County:

In Miami township he . . . took an old man named Isenhour . . . prisoner and forced him to accompany him as a guide. Anderson told Isenhour that he . . . belonged to Jim Lane's Kansas jayhawkers. Isenhour fell into the trap and said that he himself was a strong federal sympathizer.

Near Col. Austin's residence Anderson detailed three of his men . . . "to take the guide to the rear and parole him." The three men took Isenhour into a patch of brush near the road, threw him on the ground, and cut off his head. They then folded the arms of the corpse across the breast, in such a manner as to embrace the bleeding head . . . and rode away.

As Price's army moved west, George Todd was active south of the Missouri. In the German communities of Lafayette County, Todd and his men ran amok, murdering the anti-slavery "Dutchmen" by the score. Near Concordia, Todd's advance guard, led by David Poole, was fired upon by a group of Germans concealed in a copse. One of the guerrillas, John McCorkle, tells what happened:

Poole told the boys to scatter around the thicket as well as they could and me to go back and tell Captain Todd to come on, that the Dutch were in the thicket. I dashed back, informed Captain Todd; he came up on the double quick, ordering the men to surround the thicket and for some of them to go in and run them out. What occurred afterwards reminded me of a rabbit hunt in the country. The boys started in the brush and every few minutes out would run a Dutchman and the boys on the outside would start after him. Not one of them escaped. Our advance guard then started on towards Concordia, when we discovered [a company of] Dutch coming toward

us. The rest of the command hurriedly came and formed in line just over the brow of the ridge and, as the Dutch militia came over the hill, Todd ordered us to charge and kill them. We made a dash toward them and they made a dash to get away. We ran them into a lane, some of them left their horses and, running over into a corn field, they would hide in the shocks, where our boys would soon find them and get them out. There were very few of this company that ever reached home alive.

Even amid the terrible ring of fire, pathetic shards of the old life lingered. Again, in John McCorkle's words:

While we were on the Sni, Bill Gregg told me that he was going to marry a beautiful Southern girl . . . and take her south with him and wanted me and some of the boys to go to the wedding with him. After dark, Gregg put on a new uniform and twelve of us put on our best and polished our pistols and spurs and accompanied him to the home of the bride. It was a strange scene, that wedding ceremony, a beautiful, black-eyed, black-haired Southern girl, with her little hand placed on the arm of a stalwart soldier with four Navy revolvers buckled around his waist and with twelve long-haired, heavily-armed soldiers standing as witnesses. . . . With only the members of the family beside the soldiers present, she plighted her young life to this grim warrior, fully realizing that at any moment she might be a widow. . . . We all stayed to a fine supper and we twelve, at a late hour, left the house and stood as guards for the bride and groom until we were called to breakfast the next morning.

Earlier that summer, another wedding ceremony had ended on a different note. Learning that a squad of bushwhackers were gathered at a church for nuptials, a party of Federals had swooped down on the group, killing six of the men, including the bridegroom.

Elsewhere around the state, the death and violence escalated as the ferocious irregular war rose to a grand climax. Desperate as the situation seemed, some Unionists saw Price's invasion and the thousands of U.S. troops on his trail as a blessing in disguise. One of those who did was T. Dwight Thacher of the Kansas City *Journal of Commerce*:

The guerrilla season for this year is nearly over. It cannot be many days before the leaves will begin to fall, and with the fall of the leaves they begin to migrate to the South. . . . Barren trees will afford no shelter to the rebel assassin and the bushwhackers, like evil birds, will seek a more southern clime. . . .

We have so many federal soldiers in the State . . . that it seems as though we ought to be able to "bag" a good many of these outlaws as they attempt to escape. A proper disposition of our forces along their lines of retreat out of the State, and a short but vigorous campaign against them in the brush, would result in the capture or extermination of a good part of the dastardly

wretches who have plied their scoundrelly work of pillage and murder so industriously during the summer. If they escape, it will only be to return and plague the people again next year. Nothing will ever put a stop to the outrages of these Confederate bushwhackers but extermination, and for the next four or five weeks our troops will have better facilities for accomplishing that desirable end than they can have during any other portion of the year.

Following the bloody debacle at Centralia, the Federal effort in northern Missouri had increasingly concentrated on stopping only one man—"the blood-drenched savage," Bill Anderson. Because normal methods had failed thus far, the Union high command sought others. One approach involved the services of former Indian scout and tracker Maj. Samuel P. Cox. On October 27, after several days of preparations, Cox closed in. In the words of a Federal officer:

We came across the rebel pickets some mile east of Albany in the road, ten or fifteen strong. Our advance guard drove them in and through Albany, which is situated in the MO bottoms at the foot of the bluffs: the whole command followed up and were dismounted in and south of the town, leaving the 4th man to hold horses, except—our advance guard of cavalry . . . who was sent forward to engage & draw out the enemy.

Our infantry were formed into company lines & marched forthwith into the open woods beyond Albany some 400 yards, and thrown into line of battle. . . . Scarcely had the lines been formed, when the enemy who had also been drawn up in line of battle . . . from two to three hundred strong, some five or six hundred yards from our line, were engaged by our advance. . . . Onward came [Anderson] and his followers in hot pursuit of our advance guard with such hideous shrieks and fiendish yells that made the very woods ring for miles. . . . Our advance retired to the rear of the infantry line, which opened the way for them.

The enemy came on in full charge, yelling like indians without firing a shot, until within 75 or 80 yards of our line. When the firing commenced on both sides [it] was kept up without ceasing with great fierceness until the enemy came within 40 or 50 yards of our line: [Anderson] & some five or six of his associates in crime came dashing considerably in the advance of their line and their chieftain . . . with one other . . . charged fearlessly through our lines and were both unhorsed close in our rear. Anderson falling dead upon the ground in twenty yards of our men, having received two balls in the left side of his head near the ear. The other raised & scrambled off into a field to our left, where he was found dead next day. The enemy seeing their leader fall, could stand no longer, but fled in wild confusion & returned no more. . . .

Anderson rode a fine Iron Grey mare with a human scalp tied to the head stall of his bridle. . . .

Bill Anderson in death *State Historical Society of Missouri, Columbia*

> [He] had four revolvers buckled around him and two very large ones across his saddle. He was well dressed with rich clothing: had on a white wool hat—with a long fine black plume in it; wore a fine net undershirt and over it one of fine black cloth most elegantly embroidered on the sleeves and breast; a fine blue cloth vest; and a close bodied frock coat of excellent drab colored cassimere and pants of same. He had on his person a fine gold watch and chain and a silver one. $323.00 in gold and $273.00 in paper money besides some silver change and small paper currency and eighteen dollars in confederate money. He also had his own likeness and another supposed to be his wife's and in his pocket book was also found a short memorandum which we suppose is from his wife. . . . After going on to mention certain articles such as a dashing woman would fancy for dress and ornament and some toys for her babe . . . she winds up thus: "your ever loving and obedient wife until death."

"That burial," wrote an elated editor of the St. Joseph *Morning Herald*, "was the breaking of the backbone of guerrillaism in North Missouri. . . . An avenging God has permitted bullets fired from Federal muskets to pierce his head, and the inhuman butcher of Centralia sleeps his last sleep."

For his role in slaying Anderson, Samuel Cox became a hero. He was presented with a ceremonial sword, promoted to colonel, and sent back out to kill more guerrillas.

Even though he remained anonymous, the Yankee sniper near Independence who fired the fatal slug that tore through George Todd's throat performed an equally valuable service for border Unionists. In less than a year, William Quantrill too would meet his end—shot near Louisville, Kentucky, in a skirmish with Federal guerrillas.

As the Southern army moved steadily closer toward Kansas, a fresh wave of terror rolled over the state. Hated rebel that he was, Sterling Price was viewed by most Kansans as an honorable soldier versed in the rules of civilized warfare. It was the merciless bushwhacking packs that prowled in his wake that caused the greatest alarm, however. As always, no Kansas community suffered more than Lawrence. When nervous pickets south of town fired on illusory guerrillas one night, the gunshots triggered a mass panic. "Drums have been beating. . . . Troops are marching by . . . ," tapped a shaken telegraph operator. "We expect to be attacked tonight."

When the line suddenly went dead a short time later, many townsfolk ran screaming over the new bridge and hid in the timber north of the river. With morning light, however, the incident was revealed as nothing more than the latest in a long line of false alarms. Demanded the still-trembling and thoroughly exhausted editor, Hovey Lowman: "This firing in and about the city must be stopped. We don't want any more alarms of

this kind. It is bad enough to be aroused by a real cause for danger, without being hunted up by a bogus call. . . . Let us all keep cool."

As the weeks of autumn 1864 slipped by, Elizabeth Duncan recorded in her diary the daily stress of those living in Lawrence:

> Oct. 12
> I fear we will have another raid. State militia out. Militia left for Olathe. Store closed, Mr. D[uncan's] company is here yet. I am so glad and sometimes almost sorry too for I fear he is in more danger [here] than there. The stores are all closed. . . .
>
> 13
> Still a great deal of excitement. . . . All business seems to have stopped. There was no prayer meeting tonight on account of the excitement. Feel sad & melancholy.
>
> 19
> Stores still closed most of time. Excitement as normal.
>
> Oct. 21
> I fear that Lawrence will be overrun by the rebels yet. I trust our forces will be able to keep them back. I feel very sad and depressed in spirits.
>
> 22
> Dispatches telling us that our town was in danger of being burnt by the rebels by night. Most all the dry goods in town was started to Leavenworth. . . . All is excitement here. Mr. Duncan is on guard. . . . It is two o'clock in the morning.

When the climactic battle between Price and the Union defenders of the border opened just south of Westport the following day, October 23, most Kansans expected the worst. Many people in Olathe, Gardner, and other towns along the Santa Fe Road did indeed receive the "worst," as Julia Lovejoy of Baldwin City reveals in a letter:

> Two of our citizen-neighbors [at the Battle of Westport] thought that "all was lost" and broke from the ranks, putting spurs to their horses, and thought of nothing but saving their families by flight. Their return, almost speechless from fright, created a panic such as we have seldom witnessed, even in Kansas, causing a general stampede to the forests for concealment, and the clearing of almost every house of valuables.

When word of the supposed defeat reached Lawrence, the "stampede" was almost complete. It was also short-lived, as Elizabeth Duncan soon noted: "When we got about two miles out of town we had the good glorious and welcome news that our men was [victorious] and was driving Price with his forces. O how glad we was."

The Union victory at Westport not only dashed the last Confederate hope for Missouri, but it prevented Price from devastating the relatively untouched Kansas hinterland. The ill-fated border was another matter, however. As the rebels retreated south along the Kansas line, what was encountered was generally destroyed. Also, for the first time in over a year, small bands of bushwhackers at last penetrated the hated state. Many took up where they had left off, as one Federal officer quickly discovered:

> Every house within reach . . . was robbed of everything it contained. All kinds of clothing were taken. . . . Every morsel of food . . . was consumed, destroyed or taken along; and all the stock that could be led or driven was taken. . . . Six miles north of . . . Trading Post they murdered Samuel A. Long, aged fifty-six years; he was previously robbed of his money. Three miles north of . . . Trading Post, John Williams, a preacher, aged sixty years, was indecently mutilated and then hung.

Others in the warpath fared no better. A captain in the Eleventh Kansas Cavalry recorded one incident:

> Near the [Marais des Cygnes River] they passed the house of an humble settler who happened at the time to be standing in his yard. A lot of them rode in and asked him if he had any horses. He told them no, nothing but a couple of little ponies which were of no account to anybody. They replied that they would take the ponies and kill him, whereupon they shot him dead in the presence of his wife and little ones. They then went into the house and plundered it. Among other things they found a pot of soap-grease which they devoured like so many half famished wolves and then, to exhibit their petty spite against the poor woman, they smashed the pot. A little way from the house was a splendid spring of pure cold water, which the family had excavated to the depth of ten or twelve feet and had walled it up, making a very wide and copacious well. After exhausting the water in supplying themselves and animals, these brave soldiers led one of their old broken down horses up to the mouth of the well, shot him and tumbled him in. Having thus murdered the poor woman's husband, and plundered the house, they left her and her little ones to perish for water.

In the void created by the withdrawal of Federal troops sent north to deal with Price, partisans from southern Missouri seized the opportunity to raid neighboring Kansas. Along the Little Osage, free-roaming gangs murdered and burned with impunity. Farther south, on the night of October 22, a band of bushwhackers led by Allen Matthews rode into the village of Marmaton. A chronicler tells what happened:

> They . . . commenced capturing every man they could get hold of, and firing on any they saw trying to run away. They first picked up Colonel Horatio Knowles, Daniel M. Brown, Dr. L. M. Chadwick, Joseph Stout, Abner McGonigle and Warren Hawkins. These men they murdered in the most

cold-blooded manner, as fast as they came to them, in some instances taking hold of their victim with one hand and putting a bullet through his head from a revolver in the other. In other cases they would repeatedly shoot into their prisoners while they were down and begging for mercy. . . .

The stores in town were. . . . robbed and then burned [as were]. . . . the Methodist church, and other buildings. . . .

On October 25, 1864, pursuing Federal forces finally overhauled Price's army on the banks of Mine Creek. In the thundering cannonade and cavalry charge that followed, the rebel ranks were shattered like glass, with hundreds killed, wounded, and captured. Wrote one eyewitness: "The scene after the battle was terrifying. Fully three hundred horses horribly mangled were running and snorting and trampling the dead and wounded. Their blood had drenched them and added to the ghastliness of it all." But worse was to come. Because of their ragged condition, as well as cold weather, many rebel soldiers had donned warm Federal clothing captured at various battles and skirmishes along their route. Too late, scores of captured Confederates discovered that the border was a land without pity. Despite pleas for mercy, all prisoners caught in Union blue were slaughtered as they stood.

From Mine Creek the victorious Federals hounded the remnants of Price's army as it fled south. Participating in the pursuit was Charles Jennison's old regiment, the Seventh Kansas Cavalry. Trooper Webster Moses jotted down the scene in his diary:

> The others come up on the gallop and continue the chase. As they pass . . . they make the air ring with cheers and press on after the rebs. The ground was covered with dying and dead. The sight was awful. [We] at last got in the advance and made another saber charge of about 5 miles on the dead run but our horses were so exhausted from want of feed and fatigue that we could overtake but few who fell victims to our sabers. None were taken prisoner by the 7th Kan. . . .

Another regiment involved in the chase was the Fifteenth Kansas, led by Jennison himself. Whether rebels wore blue or gray, it was all one and the same to the merciless Jayhawker. In his rush to murder Missourians, Jennison even executed several Kansas militiamen by mistake. When Price's army reentered Missouri just north of Fort Scott, the little colonel and his Jayhawkers eagerly followed. Composed largely of "thieves, Robbers & murderers," wrote one upright sergeant in the unit, Jennison's regiment had been "recruited out of the Penitentiar[ies], Jails and Guard houses" of the West. Soon after entering "Secessia," the Fifteenth embarked on an orgy of theft, arson, and murder. Testified one Missouri Unionist: "Where [they] passed the people are almost ruined. . . . There are cases where the men tore the clothing off of

women in search of money. . . . They acted worse than guerrillas." And wherever Jennison passed, a ghostly row of swinging corpses also marked the trail, his victims "hung and shot both at the same time."

Finally, under gray skies of sleet and snow, Sterling Price crossed the Arkansas River in early November, "carrying away with him," said a happy Federal commander, "the murderers, marauders and bushwhackers that infested Missouri . . . and Kansas." The officer continues: "He entered Missouri, feasting and furnishing his troops on the rich products and abundant spoils of the Missouri Valley, but crossed the Arkansas destitute, disarmed, disorganized, and avoiding starvation by eating raw corn and slippery elm bark." On that dreary, anticlimactic note, the most horrific and savage year of the war came to an end.

13.

AT WAR WITH PEACE

By the winter of 1864–1865 it seemed obvious to almost everyone in America that the great Southern rebellion was on its last leg. Everywhere throughout the South, Federal armies were poised to deliver the finishing blows to secessionism and snatch the victory that had eluded them for four long years—everywhere, that is, except the western border. In that far-flung and largely forgotten theater of war, the guerrillas of Missouri seemed as firmly entrenched and defiant as ever. Even if the regular Confederate forces laid down their arms as one, there was a genuine fear in the West that the ruthless, hate-crazed rebel bushwhacker would fight on to the "last ditch." For a time, at least, those fears seemed well-founded. Indeed, the new year, 1865, was only hours old when Kansas City editor T. Dwight Thacher was forced to record in his columns yet another in a seemingly endless string of sad and senseless events, this time near Westport:

> Between twelve and one o'clock last night [the Reverend Thomas] Johnson was called on by parties in his door yard.—He went to the door and opening inquired who they were and what they wanted. They replied that they were Federal soldiers and wanted he should show them the way to Kansas City. He told them which road to take. They then said they wanted to come in and warm themselves. He replied that his fire was out. By looking through the side light over the door, he saw that they were at such a distance from the door that he could open it without their rushing in, which he then did, and stood in the doorway talking with them. They then asked for water. He told there was a well at the back of the house, where they could help themselves. Seeing that they were crowding toward the door, Mr. Johnson stepped back, when they made a rush to get in. He succeeded, however, in shutting and locking the door. But the assailants fired a volley through the door and side windows, one ball of which took effect, causing his almost instantaneous death.—His wife had rushed to his side, and finding that he was killed, seized a couple of guns and rushed upstairs to her son and another young man who were occupying the upper part of the house, telling them

> that Mr. Johnson was killed and to defend the house. The murderers had meanwhile secreted themselves behind whatever offered a protection in the yard and kept up a constant firing at the windows of the house. Some shots were fired from the house, and after keeping up this kind of a warfare for an hour and a half, the murderers withdrew, riding off south by the same road they had come.

The Reverend Johnson was "a man universally loved and respected by all who knew him," concluded Thacher. "His death has cast a gloom over the whole community."

Later that month the village of Barnesville, Kansas, was raided by a gang of guerrillas who quickly fled across the line to Missouri. In response, a band of Unionist regulators scoured the land about the stricken town, menacing and murdering settlers of questionable loyalty. The leader of the group was Jack Curtis, a Jayhawker who spent much of his time "in search of bushwhackers living in Kansas." One dark morning, near Mound City, Curtis and company surprised a sleeping Jacob Whalon and promptly led him away. According to the Topeka *State Record*:

> He begged that he might be permitted to ride his own horse—which was a splendid animal—but Capt. Curtis . . . thought best to put him upon a slow horse. . . . When within about four miles of [Mound City], Whalon, who was left in the charge of a guard of eight men, took it into his head that he would leave the guard and travel alone. He was ordered to halt five times, but disobeyed every order. The guard thought such contempt for the authority of the United States ample proof of disloyalty of itself, and seeing no other way of stopping him, all simultaneously fired. The result was that Whalon was killed. This is work in the right direction.

On January 31, the oft-raided hamlet of Aubrey, Kansas, was again visited by guerrillas, who burned much of what remained in addition to killing one man. Although pursuing Federal cavalry scattered the raiders and troops soon marched in to garrison the town, this was, raged one Kansan, "like locking the stable door after the horses have been stolen."

Elsewhere on the border, the omens of a bloody spring to come seemed hidden in every shadow. Warned editor Samuel McKee of the Olathe *Mirror*:

> There is one thing certain; our citizens were never in much more real danger from bushwhackers than at present; within the past three weeks quite a number of small bands have been driven from the north side of the river into Jackson county, Mo., and if they are so disposed can concentrate in a few hours time, thus forming a formidable band of as reckless, blood-thirsty fiends as ever run unhung. . . . We censure no one, because we do not know at whose door to lay the blame; but we must say, in conclusion, that unless we have more troops . . . it is the universal belief that Kansas will have an-

other massacre perpetrated within her boundaries by the red-handed bushmen of Missouri.

And across the line, others were equally frightened and unsure just what the future would bring. In a letter to her son, dated February 26, one Missouri mother revealed her terrible dilemma:

> We think a bout leaveing here if peace is not made very soon. we do not know wheare we will go. we was rob last fall of three hundred Dollars worth. and all for the Brush men. and they are here a gain. one of their wives are here. I hav toald them that I could not coock for them. that the Feds had swore vengeance againstes us if we ever fed them a gain. what are we to do. I want you and the Boys to give your advice and that as soon as you can. . . . a brush man by the name of Bill Renels, went to Mr. Miller Easleys hous. and beate him with his Pistle in a shameful maner be cause he reported on him. the order is if we see or heare of a bush whacker we are to re porte. or be shot if a man. if a lady she is to be banishted south. tell us what to do. . . . tell me all you think. I want to know.

With spring and warmer weather, violent activity escalated. Again, as it had for the past four years, the western border braced for yet another round of bloody guerrilla warfare. But then, in early April, came the inevitable yet somehow startling words:

GLORIOUS NEWS!!
LEE'S ARMY CLOSED OUT!!
No Mistake This Time!
LEE SURRENDERS!!
THE CORRESPONDENCE.
The Country Rejoicing!

In Kansas, the celebration was spontaneous, boundless, and unforgettable. Reported a jubilant John Speer of the *Kansas Tribune*:

> When the intelligence . . . reached Lawrence, it spread all over the city in an incredibly short space of time. Everybody was elated. All work was suspended—many persons were in from the country, and soon a rush was made for the *Tribune* office for the intelligence. . . . The hall to the composing room, the stairs and the pavement below were crowded with anxious men awaiting the glorious intelligence. The newsboys were unable to get out of the hall until after several trials. When they did finally get out, everybody rushed after them for the glorious news.
>
> Soon crowds gathered in the streets, and cheer after cheer went up in every direction. All was hilarity and excitement. All the flags in town were sold and everything animate and inanimate was decorated with the Stars and Stripes. . . . All public places, which could secure the "banner of beauty and glory," had it floating to the breeze. Crowds of men and boys paraded

> the streets with banners. Country people with teams and in buggies decorated their horses, and the star-spangled banner floated everywhere. At night, rockets, Roman candles, and all other kinds of fireworks were in requisition, and bonfires and illuminations were prominent. . . .

Added Hovey Lowman of the crosstown *State Journal*: "The jollification was kept up until a late hour, when everything was as quiet as though no great event had taken place and that four years of one of the fiercest struggles known in civilized times had not just begun to close. . . ."

While church bells in Kansas had pealed the news and cannon had thundered the victory, in Missouri there was only silence. After years of marching armies, raiding Jayhawkers, and unbridled outlawry, the once lovely and bounteous West Missouri countryside had been transformed into a blackened waste—the "burnt district," some of the former residents called it. The Reverend George Miller was one. Returning home from exile, the stunned minister could hardly believe his eyes:

> My wife and I came through Johnson, Cass and Jackson Counties and, for miles and miles, we saw nothing but lone chimneys to mark the spots where happy homes stood. It seemed like a vast cemetery—not a living thing to break the silence. . . . Man no longer existed there.

In some border counties whose antebellum population had been as high as eight thousand, only a few hundred remained by war's end. Wrote one Vernon County chronicler:

> When Appomattox came there were not more than a hundred families in the county. There was neither town nor village. At Nevada City, a dozen small, scattered houses, out of repair; at Balltown . . . a dozen; at Montevallo, none. Riding from Nevada to Balltown, one did not pass a house. . . . There was not a store in the county.

In neighboring Barton County, only six families were left. After looking about at the incredible carnage and destruction, the few along the border who yet remained could count their survival as nothing short of miraculous. Although he was describing the scene around Warrensburg, Missouri, when George Hedges wrote his daughter shortly after war's end he might well have been depicting almost any community on either side of the line:

> We are well and surprising to tell, have lived through without any particular personal harm; we have been robbed and plundered in the house and out of it, by . . . both friends and foes of the government party, and the country has been full of [those] who have gone about robbing and plundering . . . and in a great many instances, murdering men for mere opinion's sake. . . . Then the Federals would in the night generally turn out and kill as many more or

perhaps twice or thrice as many by the way of retaliation and so it went until half our people were either killed or run away to avoid death.

Mr. Shaw our neighbor was killed, Joseph Matthew of Blackwater town was killed, Baldwin Fine, Mr. Rogers, Mr. Shaffer, Mr. Dean, Mr. Kean, Offutt, Cockerel, Sanders, Fitzgerald, Stephens, Andrews, and a host of others I could mention. . . .

Columbus and a large part of our county toward the West has been burned, part by Federals and part by Rebels: nearly all of . . . the counties South along the Kansas border are consumed. . . .

[My son], James, reached home a few days ago, well and hearty and greatly grown, a man of fine size and good appearance. He is still crippled in his hand, but not so badly as I feared it would prove to be; he received no other wound. He came into Missouri last fall with General Price, and was captured near Fort Scott. . . . His horse was shot under him on the open prairie, his command routed, and he and about 600 others were captured. . . .

James and Sallie Stone, Ellis Stone and family and Dick Ellis . . . left here the second year of the war and have not returned. Joseph Stone left his farm and moved into Warrensburg, where his daughter Anna married a Federal soldier. Caleb Stone, his oldest son, was killed at Springfield the first year of the war. One of the Ramsey boys was killed and another crippled for life. Mr. Kelly's son had his leg shot off; Robert Renick also a cripple for life, and many others I could mention.

I have sold my land, and shall leave this county; it was all I had left.

While Hedges and others were leaving, a woman who had seen all the horrors of war was returning. After two years of exile, Elvira Scott stepped from the levee at Miami, a changed woman returning to a changed land: "Home looked very unlike the home I left. . . . I hope I return a wiser & better woman. I have been tried in the furnace of affliction."

In the weeks following Appomattox, there was an attempt by those who had passed through the storm to put into words what had occurred. One of those who tried was Olathe editor Samuel McKee, who not only took a parting glance at the horrible past but dared for the first time in what seemed an eternity to look ahead to the approaching future:

During the past four years and upwards there has been carried on along the borders of Kansas and Missouri the most alarming, if not the most destructive guerrilla warfare known to modern history. Death and destruction have been its only elements on either side. While on the Kansas side of the line it has been one constant state of alarm, from the known savage barbarity of the guerrillas, as has been exhibited in their but too frequent raids on our small towns, and even larger ones, . . . on the Missouri side utter and unavoidable death to those found engaged under arms . . . and destruction to their property and that of those who sympathized with them, has been the only motto. Through fear, the inhabitants of our immediate border towns and country have either moved off or refrained from making any improve-

ments or even taking care of what they had, deeming the insecurity so great, and the result is the towns especially have assumed a most vacant and dilapidated appearance, the weeds growing up in the streets, even outranking those of the wild prairie. The march of improvement, once under such good headway, has been stopped to a dead standstill. On the Missouri side of the line, where once the country through its inherent wealth was dotted over with nice cottages and fine farm houses, where everything was happy and all prosperous, scarcely anything marks the ancient habitations of man except the lone and blackened chimneys of former buildings. . . .

But couple all this with the frightful spirit of hate and revenge with which the one hunted and pursued the other, both day and night, resulting in the most fearful loss of life and breaking up of family ties, and we have the most alarming picture of war that can be painted, and all this has been endured for four years.

But now, as if from a stroke of [a] mighty arm . . . the great slaveholder's rebellion is suddenly crushed, peace stepping in extends her magic wand over the entire land and proclaims "peace be still"; the din of battle of a few weeks ago is quickly hushed, and war has betaken itself to the quiet pages of history; it is time to think no more of the troubles of war, but prepare at once to enter into the march and improvement of peace.

Let every loyal man then . . . who has been obliged, through fear, to quit his home, return immediately without fear of molestation, and proceed at once to re-open his farm, rebuilding that which in any manner has been destroyed, and that with a view of not being again troubled. . . .

It behooves, then, the inhabitants of this, the richest portion of the American continent, and geographical center of the United States, to go to work in earnest. . . . Start our schools with renewed vigor; refit our churches which have so long been used as barracks and hospitals and turn them to their legitimate use; open up highways and build railroads. . . . Start business and trade of every kind; in short, let the man who prefers the occupation of farming, the mechanic who wishes to apply his trade, the school teacher who desires to teach . . . , the merchant, the manufacturer, the public spirited man, all awake from the lethergetic slumber into which they have been plunged so long, and pursue an energetic course; make this country what its natural facilities have calculated it should be, one of the finest countries in the world.

Although the Missouri guerrillas remained relatively quiet in the days and weeks after hostilities officially ceased, there was strong concern among many border residents that they would continue the fight from their woodland lairs. On that score there was needless alarm. Their ablest leaders dead, sickened and disheartened by defeat, partisans, like their regular counterparts who had fought and suffered in the ranks through four long years of war, saw with Appomattox a chance to escape the contest with their lives—something not even the most sanguine had believed

possible but a few short months before. Throughout the spring and summer of 1865, feelers from the various bushwhacking bands arrived at Federal outposts. The following exchange was typical:

May 25, 1865

Capt. Younger, Sir:—I understand that peace is made. Myself and my little band, wishing to quit fighting and obey the laws of the country, I will send you these few lines to show you the terms that we are willing to surrender on: we must keep our side arms—for you know we have personal enemies that would kill us at the first opportunity. . . . I also have horses in my outfit that belongs to citizens of this county, that we are willing to return to their proper owners, for we did not take them for our profit—we took them to save our lives. I have a horse that I rode from Texas, that there is no use in a man talking about me giving up. When my men surrender, they expect to leave the State.

Now, Capt. Younger, these words I write in earnest; there will be no use in talking about myself and band coming to Liberty if you don't allow us our side arms, and give us an honorable parole. We are willing to blot out the past and begin anew. If I come to Liberty, will let you know distinctly that I and my men intend to behave ourselves, and not throw out any insinuations nor insults to soldiers nor citizens, nor we don't intend to take any from them. Understand me, we blot all out and begin anew. Now, sir . . . if you wish peace and prosperity in this county, you will accept these propositions. Drop me a few lines in answer to this.

Yours, respectfully, Oliver Shepherd, Captain.

HEADQUARTERS, POST OF RICHFIELD,
RICHFIELD, Mo., May 25, 1865

Mr. Shepherd—Sir: I have just received a letter from you in which you state you are desirous of surrendering your forces. Sir, in reply to your propositions, I will say that the terms upon which you are willing to surrender *cannot* be accepted by me. You wish to retain your arms—this you cannot be permitted to do under any circumstances. If I accept your surrender it must be upon the same terms that others of your "profession" are being accepted; upon which is a return of all arms and other property which may have been taken by you during your operations, and all arms which you may have had before, or which you may now have in your possession. With this, sir, I will close.

Yours, etc.,
B. F. Cooper, First-Lieutenant,
Capt. Younger's Company, commanding Post.

Despite his threat, Shepherd quickly came to terms. Like most others the bushwhacker laid down his arms, and, with hopes of living out the remainder of his life in peace, he set his face homeward. That peace proved largely illusory, however. With Radical Republican governments, both

state and national, screening their acts, vindictive Unionists humiliated, harassed, and hunted returning guerrillas at every turn. The words of Jim Cummins were the words of many: "I . . . fought for things I thought was right. When the war was over and I wanted to settle down they would not let me, but pursued me with a malignant hatred. . . ."

A number of former bushwhackers, Oliver Shepherd included, were hunted down and shot or dragged out by vigilance committees in the dead of night and lynched. Others fled the state to Texas or the mining camps of Montana. Some simply swallowed their pride, suffered the insufferable, and silently submitted to the terror of the victors. There were a few, though, who refused to bow down. Born in strife, reared in battle, many of these young men had known nothing but war, and for them the Federal version of peace looked strangely like more of the same.

Ten months after war's end, the Liberty, Missouri, *Tribune* took special note of one such group:

> Our usually quiet city was startled last Tuesday by one of the most cold-blooded murders and heavy robberies on record. It appears that in the afternoon some ten or twelve persons rode into town, and two of them went into the Clay County Savings Bank, and asked the clerk . . . to change a ten dollar bill, and as he started to do so, they drew their revolvers on him and. . . .

For most of the nation, the great Southern rebellion was over. For eighteen-year-old Jesse James, however, it had just begun.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Andreas, A. T. *History of the State of Kansas*. Chicago: A. T. Andreas, 1883.

Barnes, Lela, ed. "An Editor Looks at Early-Day Kansas: The Letters of Charles Monroe Chase." *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 26, no. 2 (Summer 1960): 113–51.

Barton, O. S. *Three Years with Quantrell: A True Story Told by His Scout John McCorkle*. 1914. Reprint. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992.

Bidlack, Russell E., ed. "Erastus D. Ladd's Description of the Lawrence Massacre." *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 29, no. 2 (Summer 1963): 113–21.

Blair, Ed. *History of Johnson County, Kansas*. Lawrence: Standard, 1915.

Bland Collection. Jackson County (Mo.) Historical Society, Independence.

Bodwell, Sherman. Diary. Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.

Braden, David R. Diary, 1864–1866. Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.

Brannock, Lizzie. Letter, 1864. Western Historical Manuscript Collection, University of Missouri, Columbia.

Brant, Marley. *The Outlaw Youngers: A Confederate Brotherhood*. Lanham, Md.: Madison Books, 1992.

Brophy, Patrick, ed. *"Found No Bushwhackers": The 1864 Diary of Sgt. James P. Mallery*. Nevada, Mo.: Vernon County Historical Society, 1988.

Brown, John Stillman. Family Papers, 1818–1907. Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.

Carter, Don C. Papers, 1862–1902. Western Historical Manuscript Collection, University of Missouri, Columbia.

Castel, Albert. *A Frontier State at War: Kansas, 1861–1865*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1958.

———. *William Clarke Quantrill: His Life and Times*. New York: Frederick Fell, 1962.

Connelley, William E. *Quantrill and the Border Wars*. 1909. Reprint. New York: Pageant, 1956.

Connelley, William Elsey. Papers. Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.

Conway, Alan, ed. "The Sacking of Lawrence." *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 24, no. 2 (Summer 1958): 144–50.

Cordley, Richard. *History of Lawrence, Kansas from the First Settlement to the Close of the Rebellion*. Lawrence: E. F. Caldwell, 1895.

Cummins, Jim. *Jim Cummins' Book Written by Himself*. Denver: Reed Publishing Co., 1903.

———. *Jim Cummins the Guerrilla*. 1906.

The Daily News' History of Buchanan County and St. Joseph, Mo. St. Joseph: The St. Joseph Publishing Co., n.d.

Dix, Mrs. R. C. "Quantrill's Raid: An Eyewitness Account." *Westport Historical Quarterly* 1, no. 1 (May 1965): 8–11.

Dobak, William A., ed. "Civil War on the Kansas-Missouri Border: The Narrative of Former Slave Andrew Williams." *Kansas History* 6, no. 4 (Winter 1983/84): 237–42.

Doerschuk, Albert N. "Extracts from War-Time Letters, 1861–1864." *Missouri Historical Review* 23, no. 1 (October 1928): 99–110.

Douglas County (Kans.) Clippings. Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.

Duncan, Elizabeth. Diary, 1864. Kansas Collection, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence.

Fisher, Hugh D. *The Gun and the Gospel: Early Kansas and Chaplain Fisher*. Chicago: Kenwood, 1896.

France, Charles B. Papers, 1856–1890. Western Historical Manuscript Collection, University of Missouri, Columbia.

Frazier, Margaret Mendenhall, ed. *Missouri Ordeal, 1862–1864: Diaries of Willard Hall Mendenhall.* Newhall, Calif.: Carl Boyer III, 1985.

Gamble, H. R. Papers. Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis.

Goodman, Thomas M. *A Thrilling Record, Founded on Facts and Observations Obtained during Ten Days Experience with Col. Wm. T. Anderson, the Notorious Guerrilla Chieftain.* 1868. Reprint. Maryville, Mo.: Rush, 1960.

Greene, Albert R. "What I Saw of the Quantrill Raid." *Kansas Historical Collections* 13 (1915–1918): 430–51.

———. "Campaigning in the Army of the Frontier." *Kansas Historical Collections* 14 (1915–1918): 283–310.

Gregg, William. Manuscript. Western Historical Manuscript Collection, University of Missouri, Columbia.

———. *The Lawrence Raid.* Manuscript. Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.

Hale, Donald R. *We Rode with Quantrill: Quantrill and the Guerrilla War as Told by the Men and Women Who Were with Him.* Lee's Summit, Mo.: Donald R. Hale, 1975.

Hedges, George S. Letter. Jackson County (Mo.) Historical Society, Independence.

Hickman, W. Z. *History of Jackson County, Missouri.* Topeka, Kans., and Cleveland, Ohio: Historical Publishing Co., 1920.

History of Carroll County, Missouri. St. Louis: Missouri Historical Co., 1881.

History of Clay and Platte Counties, Missouri. St. Louis: National Historical Co., 1885.

History of Johnson County, Missouri. Kansas City, Mo.: Kansas City Historical Co. 1881.

History of Vernon County, Missouri. St. Louis: Brown and Co., 1887.

Langsdorf, Edgar, and Robert W. Richmond, eds. "Letters of Daniel Read Anthony, 1857–1862." *Kansas Historical Quarterly 24, no. 1 (Spring 1958):* 351–70.

"Letters of Julia Louisa Lovejoy, 1856–1864." *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 16, no. 2 (May 1948): 175–211.

Lewis, Warner. "Civil War Reminiscences." *Missouri Historical Review* 2, no. 3 (April 1908): 221–32.

Lindquist, Emory. "Religion in Kansas during the Era of the Civil War." *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (Winter 1959): 407–37.

Long, William C. Papers, 1859–1891. Western Historical Manuscript Collection, University of Missouri, Columbia.

Lowman, H. E. *Narrative of the Lawrence Massacre on the Morning of the 21st of August, 1863.* Lawrence: State Journal Steam Press, 1864.

McRoberts, A. J. Letters, 1862–1876. Western Historical Manuscript Collection, University of Missouri, Columbia.

Martin, John A. Letters. Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.

Martin, Josephine. Papers. Western Historical Manuscript Collection, University of Missouri, Columbia.

Miller, Josiah. Letters, 1860–1862. Kansas Collection, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence.

Mitchell, William Ansel. *Linn County, Kansas: A History.* Kansas City, Mo., 1928.

Moore, Frank, ed. *The Rebellion Record: A Diary of American Events.* New York: Arno Press, 1977.

Moses, Webster. Diary. Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.

Murray, Donald M., and Robert M. Rodney, eds. "The Letters of Peter Bryant, Jackson County Pioneer." *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 27, no. 3 (Autumn 1961): 320–52.

O'Neil, Eleanor. Letter. Douglas County (Kans.) Historical Society, Lawrence.

Palmer, Henry E. "The Black-Flag Character of the War on the Border." *Kansas Historical Collections* 9 (1905–1906): 455–66.

———. "The Lawrence Raid." *Kansas Historical Collections* 6 (1897–1900): 317–25.

Peterson, John M., ed. "Letters of Edward and Sarah Fitch, Lawrence, Kansas, 1855–1863." *Kansas History* 12, no. 2 (Summer 1989): 78–100.

Pomeroy, Fletcher. Diary. Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.

Quantrill, William C. Clippings. Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.

"Recollections of Mattie Lykins: Eyewitness Account of the Lawrence Massacre." *Westport Historical Quarterly* 1, no. 4 (February 1966): 10–18.
Reminiscences of Missouri Women during the Sixties. Reprint. Dayton, Ohio: Morningside House, 1988.
Rice, Martin. "What I Saw of Order No. 11." *Westport Historical Quarterly* 2, no. 4 (February 1967): 6–13.
Robley, T. F. *History of Bourbon County, Kansas, to the Close of 1865*. Fort Scott, Kans., 1894.
Rollins, C. B., ed. "Letters of George Caleb Bingham to James S. Rollins." *Missouri Historical Review* 33, no. 1 (October 1938): 45–78.
Russell, Donald Bert. *The Lives and Legends of Buffalo Bill*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960.
Savage, Mary. Letters. Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.
Schrader, W. H. Memoir. Brunswick (Mo.) *The Brunswicker*, 1981.
Scott, Elvira Ascenith Weir. Diary, 1860–1887. Western Historical Manuscript Collection, University of Missouri, Columbia.
Starr, Stephen Z. *Jennison's Jayhawkers: A Civil War Cavalry Regiment and Its Commander*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973.
Trego, Joseph. Diary, 1861–1863. Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.
U.S. Congressional Select Committee Minority Report. July 11, 1856.
Van Sickle, John H. Letters. Kansas Collection, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence.
The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880–1901.
Younger, Cole. *The Story of Cole Younger, by Himself*. 1903. Reprint. Provo, Utah: Triton, 1988.

Newspapers

Atchison (Kans.) *Freedom's Champion*, 1861–1863
Boston (Mass.) *Post*, 1863
Carrollton (Mo.) *Democrat*, 1864
Charleston (S.C.) *Mercury*, 1863
Council Grove (Kans.) *Press*, 1863
Fort Scott (Kans.) *Bulletin*, 1862
Junction City (Kans.) *Smoky Hill and Republican Union*, 1862–1863
Kansas City (Mo.) *Star*, 1916
Kansas City (Mo.) *Western Journal of Commerce*, 1862–1865
Lawrence (Kans.) *Journal-World*, 1949
Lawrence *Kansas State Journal*, 1861–1863
Lawrence *Kansas State Tribune*, 1864–1865
Lawrence (Kans.) *Republican*, 1861–1862
Leavenworth (Kans.) *Daily Conservative*, 1862
Leavenworth (Kans.) *Daily Times*, 1861–1862, 1864
Lexington (Mo.) *Weekly Union*, 1865
Liberty (Mo.) *Tribune*, 1862, 1864, 1866
Manhattan (Kans.) *Independent*, 1863
New York *Daily Times*, 1861, 1863
New York *Daily Tribune*, 1863
Olathe (Kans.) *Mirror*, 1862, 1865
Oskaloosa (Kans.) *Independent*, 1861
Richmond (Mo.) *Daily News*, 1986
Richmond (Va.) *Daily Dispatch*, 1863
Richmond (Va.) *Examiner*, 1863

St. Joseph (Mo.) *Morning Herald*, 1863–1864
St. Louis *Daily Missouri Democrat*, 1864
Topeka (Kans.) *Daily Capital*, 1941
Topeka (Kans.) *State Record*, 1863–1865
White Cloud *Kansas Chief*, 1862
Wyandotte (Kans.) *Commercial Gazette*, 1862

INDEX

Entries in *italics* refer to photographs or illustrations.

Abolitionists: as jayhawkers, 14, 50, 52, 55; politics of Kansas as free state, 6
Agriculture: daily life in Kansas of 1863, 113
Anderson, Bill, 35, 127, 135–45, 146–48, 150, *151*, 152
Anthony, Daniel, 24–25, 52
Atchison (Kans.) *Freedom's Champion*, 54
Aubrey, Kansas, 20, 29–30, 158

Banks, Alexander, 78–79
Barnesville, Kansas, 158
Bingham, George C., 15–16
Blacks: enlistment of in Union Army, 58; former slaves as jayhawkers, 56; as prisoners of war, 107. *See also* Slavery
Blair, Col. Charles, 111, 131
Blunt, Brig. Gen. James, 33, 63, *64*, 65, 109
Bodwell, Louis, 93
Bodwell, Sherman, 66–67, 97, 102–105
Booth, John Wilkes, 113
Border Ruffians (Missouri), 7
Boston (Mass.) *Post*, 96
Brannock, Lizzie, 26
Brown, John, *4*, 5, 7, 50
Brown, Molly, 126
Bryant, Peter, 8, 21
Bushwhackers: attacks on railroads, 8–10, 139–42; operations in Kansas in 1863, 60–76; as prisoners of war in Missouri, 33. *See also* Missouri; Quantrill, William
Butler, Missouri, 19, 58

Camden Point, Missouri, 134
Carrollton (Mo.) *Democrat*, 136–37
Centralia, Missouri, 139–42
Chapel Hill, Missouri, 26
Charleston (S.C.) *Mercury*, 96
Chase, Charles Monroe, 52, 92
Childs, Lt. James, 133–34
Chilicothe, Missouri, 20
Circuses: daily life in Kansas of 1863, 113
Civil war. *See* Confederate Army; Kansas; Missouri; Union Army; specific topic headings
Clark, James, 139–42
Clarke, Henry, 78
Clarke, Sidney, 8–10
Clem, John, 20
Cleveland, Marshall, *22*, 23–24
Cody, William F. ("Buffalo Bill"), 21, 23, 115
Coleman, Capt. Charles, 131
Colorado: Southern sympathizers in, 62
Columbus, Missouri, 24
Confederate Army: action in Missouri in 1864, 146–56; bushwhackers in Kansas during 1863, 60–76; guerrilla war in Kansas during 1864, 123–27; raid on and massacre at Lawrence, Kansas, 77–95; treatment of blacks as prisoners of war, 107; war on northern border of Kansas, 106–11. *See also* Bushwhackers; Quantrill, William
Cook, Hugh, 60
Cooper, B. F., 163
Cordley, Rev. Richard, 78, 93–94, 126
Council Grove, Kansas, 61
Cox, Samuel P., 150, 152
Crime: in Kansas and Missouri during war years, 116–19
Cummins, Jim, 164
Curtis, Jack, 158

Danville, Missouri, 146
Dayton, Missouri, 24
Deepwater, Missouri, 131–32
Dix, Getta, 80–83
Doyle, John, 5
Doyle, Mahala, 2–3, 5
Duncan, Elizabeth, 153

Economics: value of slaves in western Missouri, 54
Editing: of contemporary accounts, 10
Ellis, Abraham, 29–30
Ewing, Gen. Thomas, Jr., 66–67, 73, 94, 97
Executions: of bushwhackers by Union Army, 63–66; for crimes in war zones, 118–19; of guerrilla sympathizers by Union death squads, 47, 48

Federal government. *See* Union Army
Fifteenth Kansas Regiment, 133, 155–56
First Kansas Colored Regiment, 58, 118–19
Fisher, Hugh, 51–52, 84–86
Fitch, Edward, 77, 83–84
Fitch, Sarah, 77–78, 83–84
Ford, James H., 133
Fort Blair, Kansas, 107–11
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 33–34

Fort Scott (Kans.) *Bulletin*, 49
Fort Sumter: reaction to in Kansas and Missouri, 6, 7–8
Francis, John, 30–31, 39
Free state: politics of settlement of Kansas as, 6–10
Fugitive Slave Act, 50, 55

Gamble, Hamilton (Missouri governor), 69
Gardner, Kansas, 20
General Orders, No. 11, 97–100, 135
George, Hiram, 35
Giffen, John, 39
Glasgow, Missouri, 146–48
Goodman, Thomas Morton, *141*, 142–43, 144–45
Gordon, Cy, 48
Greene, Albert, 41–43
Gregg, William, 34, 38, 76

Halleck, Maj. Gen. Henry, 26
Hard, Loretta, 88–89
Harris, Nannie, 11, 13
Harrison, Col. Charles, 62, 63
Hart, Joe, 48, 70–71, 72–73
Hays, Margaret, 14, 120–21
Hedges, George, 160–61
Henly, Daniel, 48
Henning, Benjamin S., 109–11
High Hill, Missouri, 146
Hill, James N. "Pony," 48
Horses: guerrilla cavalry operations in Missouri, 37; theft of as crime in Kansas, 116
Hoy, Perry, 33–34
Hoyt, George, 26, 67, 99
Hubbard, D., 61
Humboldt, Kansas, 20
Hunt, Maj. Robert H., 130–31
Hynes, Lt. Col. D. J., 138

Independence, Missouri, 15

Jackson, Claiborne (governor of Missouri), 8
James, Frank, 35, 70–71, 143, 144
James, Jesse, 143, 164
Jayhawkers: former slaves as, 56; freeing of slaves by, 50, 52; guerrilla warfare in Missouri in 1861–1862, 11–28; settlement of Kansas as free state, 7, 10
Jennison, Col. Charles, 11, *12*, 13–16, 24, 35, 133, 155–56
Johnson, Col. Hampton, 19
Johnson, William, 18

Kansas: aftermath of Lawrence massacre, 100–105; border war in 1862, 29–40; Confederate bushwhackers in 1863, 60–76; daily life in 1863, 112–22; end of war in, 158–64; escape of slaves from Missouri to, 50–59; guerrilla war in 1864, 123–27; Lawrence massacre, 77–95; pro-slavery settlers in, 1–5; settlement of and politics of slavery, 6–10; war on northern border, 106–11
Kansas Brigade, 17–18
Kansas City, Missouri, 14
Kansas City (Mo.) *Western Journal of Commerce*, 47, 149–50
Kansas/Nebraska Act (1854), 6
Kansas State Fair (1863), 112–13
Kempf, William, 80
Kingsville, Missouri, 24

Ladd, Erastus, 78, 87
Lamar, Kansas, 49
Lane, James Henry (senator), 16–19, 51, 85
Lawrence, Kansas: fear of raids in 1864, 126, 152–53; newspaper responses to massacre at, 96–97; pro-slavery raid on in 1856, 7; Quantrill's planning of raid on, 75–76; raid on and massacre at, 77–95
Lawrence (Kans.) *Republican*, 19, 56
Lawrence (Kans.) *State Journal*, 8, 23–24, 61
Lawrence (Kans.) *State Tribune*, 159–60
Leavenworth, Kansas, 114
Leavenworth (Kans.) *Bulletin*, 59
Leavenworth (Kans.) *Daily Conservative*, 33–34, 40, 100, 112
Lecompton, Kansas, 123
Legate, James, 86–87
Lewis, Mrs. M. E., 16–17
Lewis, Warner, 62–63
Lexington, Missouri, 24–25, 117
Lexington (Mo.) *Weekly Union*, 137–38
Liberty, Missouri, 8
Liberty (Mo.) *Tribune*, 145, 164
Lincoln, Abraham, 50, 69
Linville, William, 71–72
Little, Capt. Joseph H., 131–32
Little Sante Fe, Missouri, 33
Livingston, Thomas, 48, 107
Lovejoy, Julia, 45, 92, *124*, 125, 153
Lowman, Hovey, 8, 61–62, 63, 76, 84, 89–90, 126, 152–53, 160. *See also* Lawrence (Kans.) *State Journal*
Lykins, Mattie, 73–74

McCorkle, John, 74, 148–49
McDonald, Martha, 70
McDowell, James, 60
McKee, Samuel, 158–59, 161–62
McRoberts, A. J., 46
Manassas Gap, Missouri, 129–30
Marchbanks, William, 48, 106
Marion, Kansas, 61
Marmaton, Kansas, 154–55
Marshall, Missouri, 43
Martin, John A., 27, 41
Matthews, Allen, 154–55
Mattox, Morgan, 32–33
Mayfield, Sallie and Jennie, 43–44
Mendenhall, Willard, 24–25, 47, 48, *53*, 54, 56, 57, 68–69, 122
Milhoan, J. H., 37–39

Militia: Missouri Enrollment Act of 1862 and, 45–46
Miller, Rev. George, 24, 160
Miller, Sol, 52–53
Missouri: Confederate Army in 1864, 146–56; crime during war years, 119; end of war in, 157–64; guerrilla cavalry operations and geography of western, 36; Kansas as free state, 6–10; maps of, 2, 3; Order No. 11, 97–100; slavery and guerrilla war in, 50–59; Union Army in 1864, 127–45; violence by Jayhawkers in 1861–1862, 11–28
Missouri Enrollment Act of 1862, 45–46
Montgomery, James, 19–20
Moorhouse, William S., 24
Morgen, Anna, 89
Mormons, 13–14
Morristown, Missouri, 19–20, 24
Morse, Abigail, 91
Moses, Webster, 25, 155
Mound City Sharp's Rifles, 11

Nebraska: as free state, 6
Nevada City, Missouri, 106–107
New England: settlement of Kansas as free state, 6
New Florence, Missouri, 146
New Mexico: Southern sympathizers in, 62
Newspapers: responses to massacre at Lawrence, Kansas, 96–97. *See also* Lowman, Hovey; specific titles; Wood, Sam
New York *Daily Times*, 18–19, 36, 96

Oath of Loyalty (Union Army), 44
Olathe, Kansas, 37–39
Olathe (Kans.) *Herald*, 39
Olathe (Kans.) *Mirror*, 30–31, 39, 158–59
Order No. 11, 97–100, 135
Osage Indian Reserve (Kansas), 62
Osawatomie, Kansas, 23
Osceola, Missouri, 16–18

Paddock, George, 75–76
Palmer, Capt. Henry, 27, 48, 97, 98
Paola, Kansas, 118
Papinsville, Missouri, 19
Parker, Col. B. F., 63–65, 111
Parker, Rev. R. D., 123–24
Paw Paws, 132–33
Penick, Col. William R., 46–47, 132
Picket duty: Union Army in Missouri and Kansas, 41–43
Pilots Knob, Missouri, 146
Platte River, 8–10
Plattsburg, Missouri, 71
Pleasant Hill, Missouri, 24
Pomeroy, Fletcher, 15, 25–26
Pond, Lt. James, 107, 108
Potosi, Kansas, 20
Price, Sterling, 8, 16
Prisoners of war: Confederate treatment of blacks as, 107; Missouri bushwhackers as, 33
Prostitution: life in Kansas during war years, 114

Quantrill, William: death of, 152; and early years of war, 29–40; guerrilla war in Kansas during 1864, 123, 127; raid on and massacre at Lawrence, Kansas, 75–76, 77–95; search for after Lawrence massacre, 102–105; Union occupation of Missouri and, 49; war on northern border of Kansas in 1863, 107–11

Railroads: attacks on by bushwhackers, 8–10, 139–42
Randlett, Lt. Reuben, 30, 34
Red Legs (Kansas), 26, 56, 58, 67–70, 99
Regulators: Quantrill as leader of, 29. *See also* Bushwhackers
Rice, Martin, 98–99
Richmond (Va.) *Daily Dispatch*, 96
Richmond (Va.) *Examiner*, 96
Roberts, Samuel, 91–92
Rocheport, Missouri, 128
Rosecrans, Maj. Gen. William S., 128
Rottman, Alex, 39

St. Joseph, Missouri, 8, 114–15, 124–25
St. Joseph (Mo.) *Morning Herald*, 43, 118, 152
St. Louis *Daily Missouri Democrat*, 135, 146–48
Salina, Kansas, 49
Saloons: life in Kansas during war years, 114–15
Savage, Joseph and Mary, 87–88
Schrader, W. H., 138–39
Scott, Elvira, 40, 44–45, 55, 67–68, 69–70, 121–22, 161
Scott, Fernando, 70–71
Scouts: for Union Army, 48, 49
Second Colorado Regiment, 133
Seright, Joseph, 20
Seventh Kansas Cavalry, 11, 155
Shawnee, Kansas, 49, 63
Shepherd, Oliver, 163
Slave auctions: in Missouri during war years, 56
Slave-catchers: and runaway slaves in Kansas, 55–56
Slavery: freeing of slaves by Jayhawkers, 14; settlement of Kansas and politics of, 6–10; slaves and guerrilla war in Missouri, 50–59. *See also* Abolitionists; Blacks
Smart, Robert, 44–45
Smith, Joseph, 13–14
Sniabar Hills (Missouri), 36
Southern Kansas Jay-Hawkers, 11
Speer, John, 56, 159–60
Spies: for Union Army, 48, 49
Spring Hill, Kansas, 60
Stover, Lt. Elias, 31–32, 33
Stowe, Harriet Beecher, 54

Taylor, Fletcher, 132
Temperance movement: in Kansas during war years, 115

Thacher, T. Dwight, 125–26, 127, 149–50, 157–58
Theater: daily life in Kansas during war years, 113–14
Thornton, Col. Calhoun, 133
Todd, George, 35, 60, 66, 127, 148–49, 152
Topeka (Kans.) *State Record*, 124, 158
Trapp, Job, 66
Trego, Joseph, 19–20
Twyman, Frances, 99–100

Union Army: enlistment of blacks in, 58; executions of guerrillas by, 47, 48, 63–66; Order No. 11, 97–100, 135; picket duty, 41–43; Oath of Loyalty to, 44; policies of in Missouri in 1864, 127–45; Quantrill and occupation of Missouri, 49; spies and scouts employed by, 48, 49. *See also* Fifteenth Kansas Regiment; First Kansas Colored Regiment; Kansas Brigade; Mound City Sharp's Rifles; Red Legs; Second Colorado Regiment

Van Sickle, Martha, 116–17
Vaughn, Jim, 65–66

Ward, Artemus (Charles Farrar Browne), 113
Warner, W. H., 108–109
Warrensburg, Missouri, 160–61
Wathena, Kansas, 116
Weston, Kansas, 56
Weston (Missouri) *Argus*, 16
Westpoint, Missouri, 27
Westport, Missouri, 14, 153–54
White Cloud, Kansas, 52–53
Wilkinson, Louisa, 4, 5
Williams, Col. Andrew, 50–51, 107
Williams, Armilda, 55
Williams, Col. John F., 117
Wilson, Henry, 58
Wilson, Capt. Thomas, 132–33
Women: active roles in war on western borders, 43–44; daily life in Kansas during war years, 120–22
Wood, Sam, 101, 124
Wyandotte, Kansas, 123–24
Wyandotte (Kans.) *Commercial Gazette*, 55

Yager, Dick, 35, 60, 61, 127
Younger, Cole, 35

THOMAS GOODRICH is a professional writer whose focus is the American Civil War. His book *Bloody Dawn: The Story of the Lawrence Massacre* was a selection of the History Book Club.

American History / Civil War

A SELECTION OF THE HISTORY BOOK CLUB

"[A] thorough and comprehensive study of this tragic, almost forgotten episode of American history." —*History*

"What Sherman did in Georgia and Sheridan in the Valley pales in comparison. This study truly shows the horrible cost inherent in any civil war." —*Civil War Courier*

"War . . . at its worst. [A] well-written book. . . ." —*Washington Times*

"[A] compelling account." —*Southern Historian*

"[F]ast-paced [and] absorbing. . . . *Black Flag* is a highly recommended book that transports the reader to the towns and dusty highways of Kansas and Missouri during the Civil War." —*Kansas History*

"A highly dramatic narrative of the guerrilla war along the Kansas-Missouri border, *Black Flag* tells a story that never has been told so fully and so powerfully before."

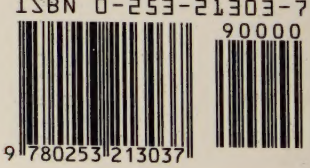
—Albert Castel

From 1861 to 1865, the region along the Missouri-Kansas border was the scene of unbelievable death and destruction. Thousands died; millions of dollars in property was lost; entire populations were violently uprooted. It was here also that some of the greatest atrocities in American history occurred. Yet in the great national tragedy of the Civil War, this savage warfare has seemed a minor episode. Drawing from a wide array of contemporary documents—including diaries, letters, and first-hand newspaper accounts—Thomas Goodrich presents a hair-raising report of life in this merciless guerrilla war. Filled with dramatic detail, *Black Flag* reveals war at its very worst, told in the words of the participants themselves. Bushwhackers and Jayhawkers, soldiers and civilians, scouts, spies, runaway slaves, the generals and the guerrillas—all step forward to tell of their terrifying ordeals. From the shocking, sensational massacres at Lawrence, Baxter Springs, and Centralia to the silent terror of a woman at home alone in the "burnt district," *Black Flag* is a horrifying day-by-day account of life, death, and war, told with unforgettable immediacy.

THOMAS GOODRICH is a professional writer with a focus on the American Civil War. His previous book, *Bloody Dawn: The Story of the Lawrence Massacre*, was also a selection of the History Book Club.

Indiana University Press
BLOOMINGTON AND INDIANAPOLIS

ISBN 0-253-21303-7



Cover illustration: *The Lawrence Massacre* by Lauretta Louise Fox Fisk. Kansas State Historical Society.